



ARTHUR'S HOME MAGAZINE.

APRIL, 1888.

SOODAN.



BELEDE-SOODAN, the "land of the blacks," is the Arabic name of a vast region lying near the centre of Africa. That part of Soodan with which our illustrations have to do is known as Egyptian Soodan, and is a part of the country shown on old maps as Nubia. This

to several of the largest of our States. Attention has recently been drawn to this ancient country as a result of the rebellion of Arabi Bey, and the war undertaken by England, nominally on behalf of the authorized government of Egypt, but really as a means of protecting from loss the English holders of Egyptian loans; for if the government of the Khedive had been subverted by the rebellion



VIEW ON THE ATBARA RIVER.

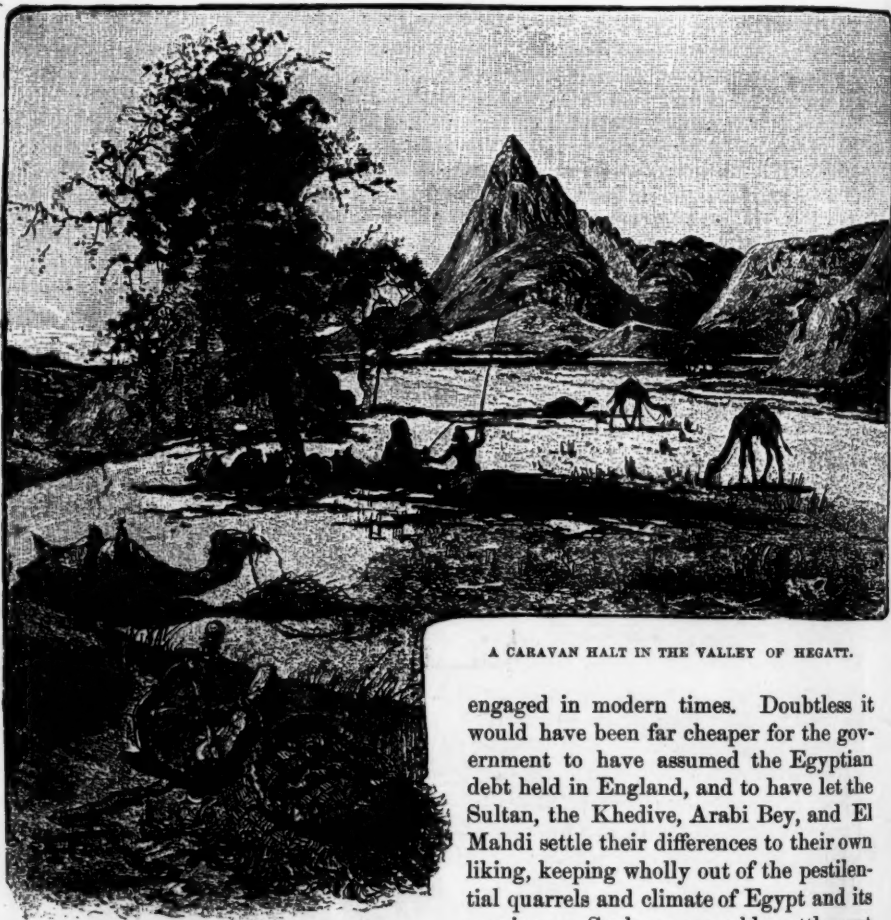
comparatively small part of Soodan is, however, an enormous country territorially, and readily embraces an area equal

VOL. LVII.—22.

of Arabi, the chances were that the bonds representing loans by Englishmen to Egypt would scarcely have been worth

their cost as paper. We all remember what a fearfully costly war that was. No sooner had the English forces subdued the larger aspect of Arabi's rebellion, than they were called upon to suppress the significant insurrection instituted by the so-called El Mahdi, or false prophet. The war

was probably more fatal in its effects upon the European soldiers than the onslaughts of the Mahdi. The disadvantages under which England labored in that war were so great, both as to the loss of life and cost in money, that it was probably one of the most expensive in which that country has



A CARAVAN HALT IN THE VALLEY OF HEGATI.

was thus transferred from Lower Egypt, as the most northern part is called, some one thousand miles southward to Egyptian Soodan, far away from the navigable waters of the Nile, and into a country swarming with a native population of fanatic enemies, and one whose climate

engaged in modern times. Doubtless it would have been far cheaper for the government to have assumed the Egyptian debt held in England, and to have let the Sultan, the Khedive, Arabi Bey, and El Mahdi settle their differences to their own liking, keeping wholly out of the pestilential quarrels and climate of Egypt and its provinces. Such a peaceable settlement of the matter, although it would have secured the money lenders, would not have maintained the wretched myth known as European "prestige," and thus was given to the world the astounding spectacle of a nominally Christian nation attempting the subjugation of a wholly barbarous people

for no adequate reason, the outcome of which could not possibly be even "glory" or territorial aggrandizement. Egypt as a possession had often been looked at by covetous European eyes, but that was not to be thought of, since England by its act crushing Arabi's rebellion was more than ever pledged to maintain the "unspeakable Turk" in his domain, of which Egypt is a part. The melancholy death of General Gordon, at Khartoom, is an episode still well remembered by all the English-speaking world, and to this day his name provokes a feeling of indignation against a government so fatuous as to permit such a brave man's life to be needlessly sacrificed, even though he was ready to undertake such a quixotic mission.

This town, Khartoom, whose surrender to the Mahdi brought about the retreat of England's army from Soodan, is now the principal mart of that country. It is situated at the junction of the White and Blue Rivers, which unite to form the Nile, and it has at the present time the largest population in Egyptian Soodan, numbering forty to fifty thousand; but it should be borne in mind that the wandering habits of the Arabs always affect very considerably the population of any place when they form the greater part of it.

The distinguished African traveler, John Lewis Burckhardt, stayed at Khartoom one night on one of his journeys, and as he speaks of it as a small village, the commercial importance that it now has, has been attained since the year 1814.

The conversion of this little village into the largest town in Soodan was effected by Mehemet Ali, the first Viceroy of Egypt, who about the year 1823 made that place the headquarters of the Turkish government in Soodan.

Although, like all Egyptian towns, the greater part is made up of mud huts, there are some really good buildings used for government offices, and the stone-faced palace of the Governor is an imposing structure. Through the town and in its

vicinity are many gardens, which the proximity of the river makes it possible to cultivate even in the dry seasons, and these, planted with date-palm, fig, and orange trees, make Khartoom a particularly attractive spot to the caravan travelers, wearied with the fatigue of a slow journey on camel-back through the arid plains and deserts of Soodan.

Suakin is the only port of Soodan, and is built upon an island quite near to the mainland, upon which latter are the suburbs of the city. The view of Suakin shown in the picture is an aspect from the Red Sea and looking west. In the time of Burckhardt the city had a population approximating ten thousand and in the neighborhood of six hundred houses. The population is very mixed, but the ruling families are of Arabic origin, called Hadherebe. Others are Bedouins of such tribes as Bisharein, Hadendoa, and Amarar. Some of the inhabitants are of Turkish origin, descendants of soldiers who were sent as a garrison by Selim the Great after he had conquered Egypt in the sixteenth century. The Governor of Suakin has the title of Emir, and is chosen from the patrician family of the Hadherebe. He is a dependent of the ruler of Egypt and pays an annual tribute possibly equal to eight hundred Spanish dollars. A Turkish custom-house officer, called the Aga, is stationed at Suakin, and a revenue of not more than three thousand dollars is collected upon the imports intended for the interior markets. These are India goods, spices, tobacco, horses, and slaves. Two dollars are paid on every slave, and three on every horse. A grain called dhourra (Indian millet) passes free, as do all articles that are for use in Suakin. The exports are waterskins, cocoa mats (used as floor coverings in the mosques of Mecca and Medina), camels, and slaves. Suakin is a great slave market, and is a centre of distribution, both to the interior Soodan and to Arabian towns on the opposite side of the Red Sea. Mokha, Djidda,

and Yemba are the largest of them. Mecca and Medina are interior towns, not far distant from Djidda and Yemba.

These wretches, for the most part doomed to a life of perpetual slavery, are negroes captured by Arabs in the interior of Africa, and when it is remembered that every family of any pretensions, not only in Soodan but in the whole of Upper Egypt and other Mussulman countries,

fairer prospect than the education of Africans by their own countrymen, previously educated by Europeans. Faint hopes, however, can be entertained that the attention of European governments will be turned toward the remote and despised negroes, while selfishness and a mistaken policy have prevented them from attending to the instruction of their own poor."

Perhaps it was in a large degree as a result of this stinging reflection that since the time of Burckhardt attempts have been made by England to reduce the interior slave traffic since she has had a controlling voice in the affairs of Egypt, and in that direction the laudable efforts of the lamented Gordon will never be forgotten. But time seems to show that the plan suggested by Burckhardt is the only one that will prove thoroughly effectual. Burckhardt's plan was to educate a number of negroes in Europe, teaching them the art of war, and let them return to their own land to teach and organize a negro army, which should finally exterminate the Shemitic invaders, and leave the whole Soodan to the natural inhabitants of the country. The idea that European soldiers would be able to endure the climate of the Soodan long enough to put a stop to the abominable traffic in slaves has received such a check in the utter failure of England's choicest soldiery to relieve General Gordon at Khartoom, that the attempt will probably never be made again to carry on a war of any kind in that country with other than native troops.

As to the character of the natives outside of the largest towns, it is pleasant to read Burckhardt's favorable summary.

"I found the Nubians generally to be of a kind disposition and without that propensity to theft so characteristic of the Egyptians. Pilfering is almost unknown among them, and any person convicted of such a crime would be expelled from his village by the unanimous voice of the inhabitants. I did not lose the most trifling article during my journey through

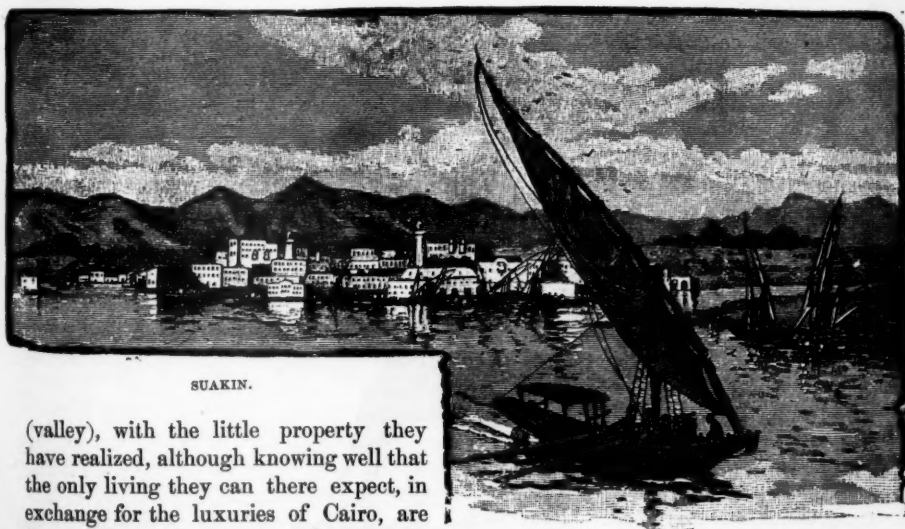


BISHARI ARAB WAR COSTUME OF 1820.

has two or three, while the wealthier families own slaves by hundreds, it will be seen what an immense traffic in them is carried on. Burckhardt says: "Europe will have done little for the blacks if the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade, which is little compared with the slavery of the interior, is not followed up by some wise and grand plan tending to the civilization of the continent. None presents a

the country, although I always slept in the open air in front of the house where I took up my quarters for the night. * * * If the government were not so entirely despotic, the Nubians might become dangerous neighbors to Egypt, for they are of a much bolder and more independent spirit than the Egyptians, and ardently attached to their native soil. Great numbers of them go to Cairo, where they generally act as porters and are preferred to Egyptians on account of their honesty. After staying there six or eight years they return to their native wady

most zealously, the countries to the south have not as yet received any attention as to their historic remains. Indeed, there are but few narratives of travel that extend beyond the recognized confines of Upper Egypt. The reason of this appears to be that all markings upon rocks, and standing ruins of temples in Nubia, indicate that what civilization there was in Soodan was of a very rude kind, and long subsequent to that under the old Egyptian dynasties. European investigators, such as Lepsius and Layard, pursued their difficult and painstaking re-



SUAKIN.

(valley), with the little property they have realized, although knowing well that the only living they can there expect, in exchange for the luxuries of Cairo, are dhourra bread (a very coarse bread made without salt) and a linen shirt. Such of them as do not travel into Egypt hardly ever go beyond the precincts of their village, for generally the Nubians have no inclination toward commercial speculations. Those Nubians who have resided in Egypt and who can speak Arabic are for the most part good Mussulmans and repeat their prayers daily; but in general the only prayer known to others is the exclamation, 'Allah Akbar!'

While Egypt has been one of the most thoroughly explored of ancient countries, and her monuments and obelisks studied

searches mainly with the view of finding remnants of great antiquity and of placing eras in our chronology prior to the Christian. Wherever there was a promise of finding earlier remains, there the devoted investigators have gone and worked. Nubia promised no such reward, and her temples seem even to have been erected subsequent to the time of the Roman invasion. The Romans penetrated further southward than Assyrian, Egyptian, or Greek, but even to them the land beyond was all "Ethiopia," and ancient maps simply show it as undiscovered country.

Practially, the land is unknown to-day, and will probably remain so till the native Africans have been enlightened, for the hot climate of Central Africa is, with but few exceptions, as fatal in its final effect upon white people as is that of the opposite extreme at the polar regions. Africa has, however, the advantage of the poles in that her land is not wholly bound in with eternal ice and snow, so that when the time comes, as it certainly will, that the black races of the earth shall receive the light of civilization, now known only to the professed Christian nations of the world, the beautiful hills and fertile valleys of that unknown country will be peopled and cultivated by the only race

that is able to endure the torrid heat of Africa. To us the day seems far off when the "poor, despised" negro shall be the equal of our dominant Saxon race, and his native land a garden, but it is not long since we have found in Northern schools that the blacks had capacities not greatly, if at all, inferior to those of their former masters. Who can tell but that the children of slaves formerly held in this country may be the means of carrying intelligence and freedom back to their brethren in their native Africa. Perhaps some of us may live to see the beginning of such a national reparation for a former national crime.



A PERILOUS RIDE.

IT was the time of the annual branding of the cattle, and the herds had been gathered from the prairie, the young separated from the old and confined in different corrals, while the work of marking was in progress, upon the ranch belonging to Mr. John Monroe, a wealthy man who had sought the verdant prairies to build himself a home, and there, with his wife and children, lived a life of prosperity and content, while his flocks multiplied and his children grew up around him, emblems of health and happiness.

It was the "merry month of June," and the sloping meadow lands lay decked with flowers, as if smiling back to the pure sunlight that bathed the hills, while the murmur of the waterfall a mile away blended with the songs of the wild fowls like a harmonious chord in nature's choir.

The house was a substantial building surrounded by strong palisades of sufficient strength to protect it against any stampeding herds that might happen to pass that way, and the main body of the cattle, about three thousand in number, were confined in a large corral a mile from the house, which stood midway between the stream and corral.

Perhaps the fact that Mr. Monroe had a beautiful daughter, of nineteen summers, had something to do with the willingness with which the young men assembled when he had anything to do requiring their services, but, be that as it may, half a dozen young men were early upon the ground, among whom were Fred Mason and Murat Browning, the

former a young man of sterling worth, but only his strong arms, backed by his own integrity, to win his way in the world. Fred was no braggart; if he possessed dauntless courage and intrepid bravery, he never told it; but there was more of the kind, gentle, and sympathetic apparent in his general demeanor than was usual among the ranchmen, and these traits frequently called forth the ridicule of his companions.

He was strong, manly, and graceful, with a broad, high forehead, keen, dark eyes that could melt in compassion as well as kindle in anger when occasion required.

Murat Browning was of a different type. He looked upon sympathy with helpless suffering as a weakness, and boasted of his ability to subdue any animal that came in his way; and certain it was that his horse knew him as a master, but not as a friend; and had the young men known that the fair Adelaide always went out and looked at the horse that every young man dismounted from who came upon her father's premises, and judged of his character accordingly, the panting sides and bleeding flank would have been less frequently left at her father's gate.

And the fact that no mark of spur or whip was visible upon the animal that bore Fred fleetly over the prairie had its influence in forming her opinion of him.

When the young men came in to dinner, a quick glance toward Fred revealed the fact that he was very pale. A contemptuous smile and a knowing look

passed over the face of Murat Browning as he observed Adelaide's inquiring glance, and he said, "The sight of the branding is too much for our compassionate friend; we cannot prevail upon him to apply the branding iron himself, and he invariably turns his head away and threatens to faint when any little calf is marked."

Fred's face flushed crimson, but he merely remarked: "Perhaps this is not a subject that Miss Adelaide would like to hear discussed."

"Don't be afraid, we won't expose your weakness in the presence of ladies, Fred, and if you faint clear away we'll promise not to tell," said Browning, and the laugh went round at Fred's expense, while he blushed like a school-boy without attempting a reply.

"Never mind, Fred, the *real* coward is he who inflicts unnecessary pain upon helpless animals confided to his care. Show me a man whose horse is covered with foam and trembles with fear when his master approaches, and I will show you both a tyrant and a coward. A man who has no sympathy with suffering, no matter in what form it may be, can never be placed upon the list of true and worthy manhood," said Adelaide, her sympathy for the painful embarrassment of the young man finding involuntary expression as she saw the maliciousness of Murat's remarks.

A look of anger and chagrin swept over Murat's features, but before he could reply there came a deep and ominous sound that brought every man to his feet and a simultaneous rush for the door.

It was a sound fraught with deadly peril, as every man knew—a sound, once heard, never to be forgotten nor mistaken. The cattle, maddened by some unknown fright, had broken out of the corral and were upon a stampede. Hastily bringing the horses within the shelter of the palisades, they waited for the herd to pass by, when suddenly Adelaide, who hastened to an upper window, uttered a cry of fear

and terror, and, leaning out of the window, pointed across the meadow.

There, coming across the intervening space directly in front of the flying herd, was little Roy Reynolds, the three-year-old son of their friend and neighbor.

The men looked at each other in awe-stricken silence, and Fred's face blanched to a deathly whiteness as the little head came toddling into sight, and, with a contemptuous sneer, Murat said: "Bring the camphor! he'll need it now!"

But, with a bound like that of a deer, Fred was out among the horses, with a lightning-like motion secured the girths of his saddle, and was away with the speed of the wind.

"Come back! *come back!*" shouted hoarse voices, "you cannot save the child; don't throw your life away in a useless venture."

But straight as an arrow rode the intrepid horseman. The ground trembled beneath the feet of the flying herd, and the sea of horns came on at a maddening rate, while the horse, seeming to partake of his master's daring spirit and excitement, fairly flew over the smooth green sward in the wild endeavor.

"He'll reach the child, but horse and rider will be overtaken and trampled into the earth long before he can return to the shelter of the palisades," muttered Murat, with set teeth and scowling face, as he jealously watched the features of the girl, as every lineament betrayed the intense agony with which she watched the daring rider. Nearer and nearer came the living avalanche, while the little one came toddling toward him, the baby feet pressing the pathway with uncertain steps, too young to comprehend the awful danger impending over it.

It came laughingly toward him, lifting the baby hands to be taken, as for a single instant the anxious watchers saw him slacken speed, bend low in the saddle, lift the child in his arms not fifty feet in advance of the flying herd, then turn, not

toward the palisades, as they had expected, but to dash off, with the cattle following, in the direction of the stream. A large tree stood upon the bank, and they saw him ride for very life, while the horse, in obedience to his master's voice, strained every nerve in the fierce endeavor to keep in advance of the awful danger. They saw him disappear down the slope as he neared the stream, and the next instant a riderless horse dashed up the opposite bank, flying for his own safety, while the cattle crossed the stream and pressed on over the hills.

"The horse has thrown him and dashed on," said Murat, almost exultingly, as he saw every trace of color forsake Adelaide's face, while she stood with wide, dilated eyes, watching the place where the daring rider had disappeared.

She could not take her eyes from the spot, and as the herd passed on, she saw him step from behind the tree and come toward the house with the child in his arms; then her strength gave way, and she sank fainting upon the floor.

Murat was the first to spring to her assistance, and as he raised her in his arms he said, "The fellow should have chosen a more favorable time to commit suicide. Poor girl, this is a terrible shock to her nerves."

None but Adelaide had seen Fred when he stepped from the shelter of the tree, but while they were all standing about endeavoring to restore her to consciousness, they were startled by hearing a childish voice exclaim, "I ride with Fred till the horse runned away," and in their very midst stood the man whom they thought had met death in the rash en-

deavor to save a little child from a terrible fate.

His face was still white from the intense excitement of his adventure, but he advanced as Adelaide opened her eyes and reached for the child with an expression of gratitude and appreciation that amply repaid him, although the satisfaction of knowing that he had rescued the little fellow from such deadly peril would have been reward enough to impel him to a similar undertaking.

"You may as well give it up, Murat; it's all day with you now," said one of the ranchmen, teasingly, as that young man stood regarding the couple with an expression of hatred and jealousy.

"I don't know what you mean," returned the young man, sullenly.

"I mean that Miss Adelaide Monroe is firm in her belief that a man is not devoid of courage and bravery because his heart is so tender that he will not inflict needless pain upon any living creature. I mean that in the man who unites sympathetic kindness with intrepid daring, honest principle, and energy of character, such a woman will gladly overlook any minor failings that may fall to his share, and, if I mistake not, he will have but little trouble in winning the brightest flower in all the country round," said the ranchman.

And he was right. As soon as Fred's honest earnings were sufficient to provide a comfortable home, Adelaide was duly installed as mistress, and proved a competent helpmate as well as a most agreeable companion, and Fred has never regretted his daring ride to save a helpless child.

ISADORE ROGERS.

IN A TENEMENT HOUSE.

IT is to a small room in one of our comfortable tenement houses that I am taking you: up three flights of grimy stairs—stairs that are a trifle dangerous and upon which a gleam of sunlight would be wonderfully welcome even though it served to reveal more plainly the unsightliness of the surroundings. At night there is a flickering tallow candle stuck in an old tin candlestick fastened to the wall; on cloudy days, also, it is sometimes there. But this is no cloudy day. Outside there is a delicious breeze stirring. We know that away over the roof-tops and the church towers and the town clock there are beautiful green hill-sides bathed in sunshine, and swaying trees, and birds that almost burst their tiny throats; and a sort of wild longing comes to us just to turn away and shut our eyes to the misery around and fly to the verdant fields and wander by the brooks and gather the flowers that are always growing there. Just to be merry and gay and gloriously happy as we mortals know how to be.

We can hear rude jests and coarse oaths and angry voices mingling together from all sides: it is worse than this at night. We can hear echoing laughter devoid of mirth, and screams of pain and fury: but it is worse than this at night. Let us hurry on; it is the third door to the right. Such a room in such a house as this!

Why, it belongs to some dear little white-washed cottage under the hills. There should be blossoming trees kissing

the window panes and birds hopping on the sills, peeping in with bright, expectant eyes. An old clock that once must have seen the blossoms ticks cheerfully away. There is the table with the turned down leaf covered with the green tablecloth that Sary Ann run the chain 'round when she was a girl: the yellow worsted is sadly faded now, but, somehow, to Sary Ann it is prettier than ever. The plaited rag mats are placed about the floor to save the well-worn carpet; some of these have a centre of red and a black border; there is one with a bright green stripe running through it; but the prettiest among them is composed of all the seven colors; the little dots of blue scattered about are pieces of Sary Ann's wedding dress. There are two women in the room, one with her knitting-needles flying swiftly through her busy fingers; the other decked out in all the glory of "company." A little boy seated quietly in the corner is regarding with curious eyes the black silk dress that rustles every time its owner moves. The woman with the pale face and the knitting is Sary Ann; and the "comp'ny" is Cornelia Jenkins come to town for a "spell."

"And I says to Lizzie this mornin'," exclaims Mrs. Jenkins, "I says, 'I'll jest run over after dinner and spend the evenin' with Sary Ann.' And law! how she laughed. 'I'd like fer to see you run over,' says she; 'I'm 'fred it would be the other way; I'm 'fred somethin' ud run over you.' And so she kept Jimmy home from school fer to show me the way, and law!

I was a breathin' hard when I says, 'Jim I 'spect you'll hev to come to fetch me home 'fore dark.' Jim, he's got a big mouth anyway, but when he says 'I reckon' I think he could a'most swallowed the town."

Sary Ann smiles—there is the breeze of the country about this woman that is delightful to her.

"But comin' up the steps was a'most too much for me. I was that 'fred I'd fall."

"They're mighty awk'ard steps," says Sary Ann.

"And the way them wimmin was a hollerin' most scart the life out o' me. It's a wonder you don't sometimes wish you was back in the country."

A flush steals over Sary Ann's worn face. Wish it? Oh! didn't she!

"Have you seen the old place lately, Nelie?"

"I drove a-past Monday before last on my way to Nash Williamses store, and when we come back I says to Joe, 'I'm goin' in and see how things is,' and Joe he says 'O mother! don't; they'll think it funny you not a-knowin' 'em.' And says I, 'Joe, can't I ask for a drink?' They showed us in the parlor while we was a-waitin' for the water, and law! it seemed as if you was up-stairs a-dressin' and would soon be down. It give me a start when I seen the datter comin' in with the glass. And Joe he was that 'shamed. I'd nearly drunk the pitcher dry down to the store, and I couldn't take more'n a sip. He says to me, when we come out: 'She'll think as you thought the watter wasn't good enough fer you, mother, or the glass was dirty or somethin';' and then I says, 'Why didn't you drink it yourself?' and that shut Joe up."

"Did you hear as how the damson tree's been a-bearin' the one behind the smoke-house. Those as George and me planted in the garden seemed as if they wouldn't grow nohow."

"I heered John Mills a-talkin' 'bout

them damsons last fall. Said as he got a bushel and a-half fer Liz to put up, and Liz she can't bear the taste of 'em, and seems as she give it to him and vowed as she wasn't a-goin' fer to stone em! and if John didn't hev to set down by the buckets and stone 'em himself. And Mollie Rogers, she was a-talkin' about 'em too. 'Pears as her man only got a half peck, and she was a-wishin' fer more. They say the tree most broke in two with 'em. Ef Joe hadn't bin along I'd hev asked about it. I think as it 'ud show kindly feelin' if they was to send you up a peck or two. But law! you town folks buy yer things in sech dribbles that I guess you'd never have sugar enough at a time fer to put 'em up. Josh Stemse's wife she thought as she'd be ekenomical with her damsons and put three-fourths to the pound. They say as the boys all made faces when they eat them spreadin's."

"Did you notice as they'd plowed up the piece of meader below the spring? George and me we always thought as we'd let it run in grass."

"They're done takin' it fer the potato patch. I heered Tom Riders say as they didn't use the spring fer drinkin' and cookin'—that they've got a pump handy to the door. Do you know as I never thought of it before, but there was a strange taste about that water, and maybe the gal did think as that was the reason I couldn't drink it. Sometimes when I haint got Joe along I'll stop in again."

"I don't think as there ever was better water than that in the spring. Law! I know I wouldn't mind carryin' it twict as far if I could get it here," says Sary Ann, with a tremulous little laugh.

"It seems a wonder as you and George ever left."

Sary Ann's knitting falls to her lap and she rubs her thin hands one over the other.

"George he thought as he could get work in the town as he couldn't get in the country, and I wanted for to come too. I'd never seen the town. We had Johnny,

you know, and George thought as he could get along better. Law! I thought as we'd live in a big house with shutters 'fore many years, and trees and flowers in the yard. I'd never seen the town."

"You don't look anyways as peart as when you used to fly 'round there between the house and the spring-house. Seemed as ef you was always between the house and the spring-house. I remember sayin' to Sam: 'I don't see how Sary Ann manages to git along so spry, considerin' there's always two o' her.' There was *your* black eyes a-shinin' and laughin', and there at your knees was another pair o' black eyes a shinin' and laughin', too."

Her black eyes are shining and laughing now, only the April shower is in them, too.

"It seems a powerful time since then. Johnny he don't remember anything about it; and it's a wonder he don't: the way he used to feed the chickens. I can see him a-standin' in the middle of 'em all, with his apron full of corn; and sometimes he used to cry 'cause they come 'fore he was ready. I tell him about it now, but he can't remember; and Bessie she declares as it were her and not Johnny."

Here Bessie's small head appears from under the table, as she shouts: "Me did feed the chickens; me frowd 'em corn out my apron."

"How long 'go is it sence you left, Sary Ann? 'Twas the spring we put the new roof on the barn."

"Seven year on the fifteenth. Johnny's a'most ten."

"Law! he aint near as tall as Bub, and Bub aint more'n eight."

"Johnny aint so strong-like; I'm 'fraid he takes after me."

"Why, you used fer to be strong, Sary Ann Shriner. I mind when you'd come along with a bucket of water in each hand and a milk pot on the top o' your head, and you a-singin'. And my! I've heered you say as that was nothin'; ef the buckets was a heap bigger'n they was

you'd carry them both to balance, and that you was a-wearin' the milk pot to make you graceful. Everybody 'lowed as George Shriner got the liveliest gal 'round them parts when he got you. Seems as ef a man livin' in the country as long as George wouldn't keer to be cooped up in one room like this'n!"

Sary Ann's fingers tremble a little, but she commences to knit very rapidly again.

"Oh! George, he don't mind," she says.

"So as men is got room enough to sleep and eat in it's all one to them. They don't seem to understand as how we wimmen like to have things smart. Ef I was never to hev any comp'ny at all, I'd still want the spare room, ef it was only jest to go in and look at and air the bed. I suppose as George thinks he can save more money livin' in small space, an' so long as you keep him in clothes and socks, bein' a man, he's satisfied."

Sary Ann's head droops over the knitting. George isn't saving any money, and she is knitting the socks for the store around the corner; and she thinks she isn't acting honestly by letting her friend suppose otherwise; but she cannot tell her how it is.

"I'd like fer to see George; when does he git home?"

There is a startled look in the black eyes. "Oh! he don't git home very early," she falters.

"I guess till he gets here I'll be gone. Jimmy hed sech a powerful time a-findin' the place in a big book down to the drug store, that I reckon he'll go there again as soon as he gits home from market. I told him as he'd better fetch a lantern along fer to show me down the stairs, and he said, 'Law! they didn't have no lanterns.' Seems to me as town folks don't have nothin' convenient—how'd I ever get along for more'n two weeks at a time. I was a-sayin' yesterday ef it was to set in rainin' and keep me from going home a Tuesday, I didn't know as what I'd

borrow an umbrell and start in the rain. But I do wish as Jimmy could find a lantern somewheres."

"I'll light the candle so as you can see your way, and Johnny and me'll go down with you. Johnny knows where all the bad places is."

"Mother, there's a new hole down there on the second pair of steps," says Johnny. "Pat Mulligan he cu-cut it with a hatchet" (stuttering in his eagerness) "so as his wife she'd fa-fall down; and Pat he fell do-down himself."

"Johnny he'll see as you don't stumble," says Sary Ann, proudly; "just you trust to Johnny, and it don't matter whether there's a light or no, but I'll see to the candle."

"He's a-comin'," says Johnny, who is quite anxious to act as guide. "He's a'most here now."

And sure enough, in another minute there is Jimmy.

"Wa'al, I reckon I'll hev to go," says Mrs. Jenkins, tying on her bonnet before the little looking-glass. "Tell George I'm sorry he didn't git in afore I left, but that I take it fer granted he's busy, and won't feel insulted ef you don't git round 'fore I leave. Ef you see it in the papers 'bout a woman starting fer home in the rain you'll know it's me."

Sary Ann comes back with Johnny. The proud little guide has his arms about her waist. The twins have fallen fast asleep under the table.

"And how did you like the lady what was here, Johnny?" she asks, wistfully.

It was something from home and she wonders what Johnny thinks.

"She talked a lot, didn't she, mother?"

"She says they've put the meader in potatoes and they don't use the spring water no more for cookin' and drinkin'."

"I think I'd like the spring water best, mother."

"Indeed you would, honey. Why, it comes right out from the rocks—you can see the vein—and we always kept

the gourd a-hangin' on the side of the spring-house. She says, Johnny, as when she was in the house she could imagine I was up-stairs a-dressin', and it gived her a start when the gal come in with the water."

She puts her hands over her face, and one great scalding tear splashes through on Johnny's cheek. "You never knew that your mother was a putty gal, did you, Johnny?"

"Just wait till I'm a man, mother," says the boy, and then he begins crying too, they have such a long, long time to wait.

"You mustn't be too hard on your father, Johnny. Maybe some day as he'll throw it off. If onct he was to throw it off he wouldn't take it up again. George never broke his word to me yet, Johnny; always remember that when you might go to be too hard on your father—George never broke his word to me yet." And he had promised to love her and cherish her and to build her a home. "If onct he was to give it up all would be right."

The heartache and the poverty and the hand-to-hand struggle with hunger and dirt—if once he were to give it up *all* would be right.

"Mrs. Shriner 'll yer come!" calls a voice from the doorway. "Mag Hoyle's lyin' like she was dead. Dave he cum in and brung Dick White, and 'cause the supper wasn't ready and no fire nor nothin', he ups and knocks'er down. Miss Wiggins sent me fer you."

Sary Ann puts Johnny's arms from about her and hurries after the boy. She takes that strange, still face on her lap, pushes back the rough hair and bathes the temples, telling the others what to do. She has done this thing before, but to-day her hand is not steady and there are tears in her eyes. Dick wasn't as bad as most of the men, and he was very fond of Mag. He stands beside her now blubbering like a baby, and saying again and again that

he didn't know what he was doing. She stays until the dull eyes open and look all their wretched anguish up into her face; she sees her safely to the ragged bed, then, all trembling with fear and excitement, she fairly runs up the last flight of blackened stairs. Suppose she, too, wouldn't have the supper in time? what if such a thing were ever to happen to her? Oh! how glad she is to see that Johnny has the table all ready and the kettle singing on the stove. She puts her hand to her head in an uncertain sort of way; there is such a strange, giddy feeling about her. "Johnny, will you raise the winder," she cries, and leans heavily against the frame. "Seein' her lyin' there so still and white has made me sort o' sick. Johnny, if ever anything was to happen to me you must always remember that he is your father. See that *everything* is on the table, honey. I'll just stand here a little and get the fresh air."

The twins are awake now, but very quietly are munching the cake the "comp'ny" had brought them.

Some one is coming up the dingy stairway; he has passed the first and second

flight and is on the third. He is coming swiftly, almost springing, one would say. Johnny goes on with the supper; he doesn't hear father coming yet. The twins hear that some one else, but they do not hear father either. He doesn't come up the steps that way: he walks slowly and heavily, and sometimes he stumbles and fumbles with the door-knob before he comes in. When the twins hear father they will creep back to the corner, for he's very cross to the twins, and once he whipped Bennie and made mother cry.

Sary Ann hears the footsteps as in a dream, and smiles. She is in the white-washed cottage under the hills. The blossoms are kissing the windows.

"Sary Ann!" He is standing beside her looking down into her black eyes, his own clear and shining. "Sary Ann, I've given it up."

Why, she is young again, this faded woman who had grown old before her time.

There are blushes on her cheeks—she is the Sary Ann he asked to be his bride. And then he stoops and does what he has not done for long, long years—stoops and kisses her on the lips.

K. H.

EASTER HYMN.

BLEST is the day that gave Thee birth,
O Lord!

Blest is the day that unto this sad earth
Gave Thee, a helpless babe—Incarnate
Word—

The fruit of woman's anguish. To human-
ity,
Gave Thee in flesh—Thou two-fold mys-
tery,
O Son of God!

Blest, too, that day which on the cross,
O Lord!

Saw Thee uplifted—saw the seeming loss
Which was earth's gain—when, of Thine
own accord,

Thou didst give up Thy life in weary
pain,

Op'ning Thy pallid lips in blessings once
again,

Thou Son of God!

But far more blessèd seems this day,

O Lord!

This holy Easter, when, in new array,

Thou art uprisen—when Thy voice heard

Makes every heart a newer life to feel,
When even Nature, wak'ning, doth re-
veal

Thee, Son of God.

When Nature doth with newer bloom,
O Lord!

Bring from the depths of winter's hoary
tomb

A prototype of Thee—when, in accord,
All hearts lift up their hymn of praise to
Thee,

Thou risen One—hope of eternity,
O Son of God!

Blest is the day when Thou didst rise,
O Lord!

Thy sad atonement done; when, with glad
eyes,

Thy true disciples saw what they had
heard

From Thine own lips—saw Thy celestial
birth,

Saw Thee above the mightiest kings of
earth,

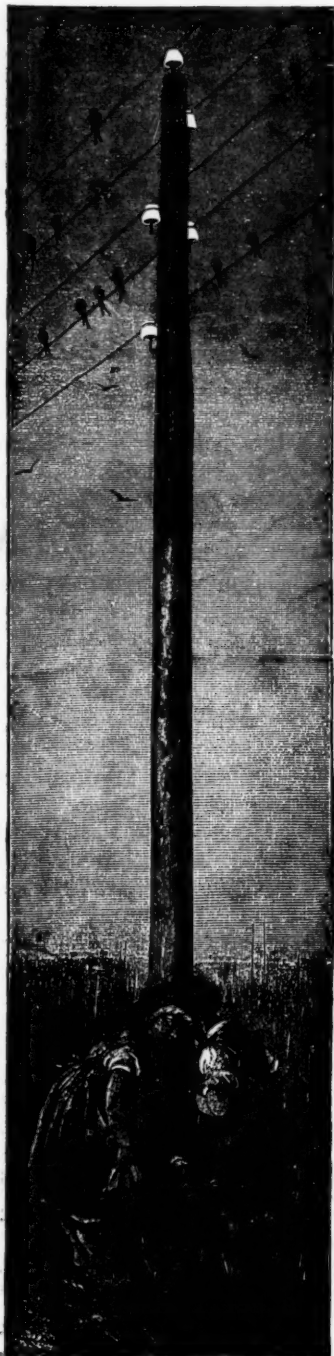
The Son of God!

GRACE ADELE PIERCE.

KILLED.

PRONE on the rugged earth he lay,
This gentle harbinger of Spring,
His lifeblood slowly ebb'd away
And left its touch on breast and wing.

For he, while morning yet was dim,
And all his singing soul on fire,
And throbbing with an unsung hymn,
Had dashed himself against the wire.



And in the dark he fell, to lie
The cold unheeding rails between,
A song within his heart to die
Unheard, and he himself unseen.

I took him up; he lay so light,
That in my heart I did him wrong
To think a thing so frail and slight
Could have such splendid wealth of song.

Was this the bird I could not see,
That somewhere from the wooded hill
Poured forth such music from a tree
That e'en the very stream grew still?

Was this the bird that sung, and brought
The soul of summer in the air,
Till all the buds grew quick with thought,
And sweet green births were everywhere?

The very bird! And this was all
His crown of song for such display—
To strike against the wire and fall,
And bleed his little life away.

He sang of Spring in fond delight,
He would not see her blossoming;
He sang of Summer, but its light
Would never strike against his wing.

Yet these were throbbing in his song,
As yearns some poet in his rhyme,
To flash against a burning wrong
The sunshine of a happier time.

But ere the light for which he woke
His song dawns upward, faint and dim,
He, bleeding from an unseen stroke,
Sinks in the dark, and dies like him.

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.

LARES AND PENATES.

THE Lares and Penates played a very important part in the domestic worship of the ancient Romans. They were content to celebrate the rites sacred to the greater gods in public worship, but the worship of the Lares and Penates was confined to the privacy of their homes, where these inferior deities were felt to be very near to them, and were revered with peculiar veneration.

Of the Penates we have very little distinctive knowledge, for to the Romans themselves they appear to have been very indefinite conceptions. They were looked upon as kindly, protecting gods, who provided for the daily family needs. They were believed to have been more strictly "heavenly protectors" than were the Lares, to whom a human origin was attributed.

The mission of the Penates was to the innermost part of man's nature, and their worship was confined to the innermost sanctuaries of the home. A fire was kept continually burning on the hearth in honor of Vesta and the Penates, and at each meal a portion of the repast was set before the images. They were regarded as beneficent beings, who with generous hand poured forth their bounties on those who were under their favored protection.

Since the State was looked upon by the ancients as only an extended family, there were also State Penates. The Temple of Vesta (the goddess of the family hearth) being to the State what the hearth was to the family, the shrine of the Penates was in the Temple dedicated to her.

The Lares were the spirits of those who, when freed from death, were purified and allowed to return to this world to watch over their descendants; thus, in a sense, adopting their posterity and becoming their guardian spirits. As they had them-

selves been mortal, it was thought that they were qualified to know what experiences would be likely to befall those they guarded, to know from what sources dangers were liable to arise, and to be able to render, when needed, the requisite assistance or succor.

The worship of the Lares, therefore, was essentially the worship of ancestors. The desire on the part of the people to secure and retain the guidance and protection of their forefathers gave rise to the practice of burying their remains within the dwelling—a custom so objectionable that it was afterward prohibited by law.

The Lares, like the Penates, had their shrines about the family hearth—the very centre of all domestic life. They received especial veneration on the first day of each month, but, like the Penates, took part in every domestic occurrence of mourning or of joy. They were objects of daily worship; they received various sacrificial offerings—offerings of the first of all kinds of fruit, and a portion of food was placed before them at every family repast and frequent libations of wine were poured upon their altar. Many festivals were held to honor and to propitiate them, and prayers, invocations, and sacrifices were offered to them on all occasions of unusual importance.

The entire contents of the house, as well as the lives of the house-dwellers, were placed with the most perfect confidence in the guardianship of these faithful household spirits. It is a little singular to note that the image of a dog, or sometimes a statue covered with the skin of a dog, was occasionally to be found among the images of the Lares. A likeness was evidently recognized between the ascribed faithfulness of the household deities and

that of a dog guarding the property of his master.

The chief room in the Roman house, the only large room, and the one in which the family met to take their meals and in which they received guests, was called the Atrium. It was a court or entrance-hall, covered with a roof, through which the room was lighted. On each side of the Atrium were passages leading to the various chambers. The size and decoration of this hall depended on the size of the house and the wealth of the owner.

The domestic chapels were in the Atrium and there the household gods were enshrined. The wealthy frequently had two shrines, or Lararia, a large and a small one. They had also masters of the Lares, and decurios (or slaves) of the Lares, whose duty it was to take care of the chapels and their sacred stores. On festive occasions the Lararia were thrown open and the images adorned with flowers and wreaths.

The images of the Lares were usually made of wood or wax; the poor frequently had only bits of very roughly carved wood. But they were cherished with especial care and devotion, and always accompanied the family in case of a change of residence.

When a son in the family became of age, assumed the *toga virilis*, he, amid prayers, libations, and the burning of incense, dedicated his *bulla* (an ornament made of gold or silver, like a medal, and worn about the neck during childhood) to the Lares.

Although it would seem that in their earliest conception these deities were considered as strictly household deities and their worship confined to the bosom of the family, the idea of their realm of influence was gradually extended until it included societies, communities, and even nations and races, presiding thus over all the works and interests of mankind. The two chief classes were the Lares domestici and the Lares publici, but these, especially

the latter, were very numerous subdivided.

These guardian-spirits were designated according to their duties. The Lares familiares were the most important of the domestic division, being the founders and protectors of homes and families. Cross-roads, being intersections of different courses, were held to have unusual dangers for travelers; these were guarded by Lares compitales; Lares marini presided over the sea; Lares rustici, over the country; Lares urbani, over the cities; Lares vicorum, over the streets, etc.

Those who became after death beneficent spirits were denominated Lares, but it was believed that not all the dead were included in their number. There were others who had been defrauded of burial, or for whom some prescribed ceremonies had been neglected, or whose lives on earth had been very faulty, who were unable to find rest anywhere. These restless ones became wandering phantoms. They were harmless to the good, but were terrible to the wicked. They were called Larvæ or Lemures.

There were solemn rites, called Lemuria, or Lemuralia, held annually on the nights of May 9th, 11th, and 13th, when every paterfamilias was supposed to perform certain midnight ceremonies, which would have the effect of banishing evil spirits from his household. At the mystic and solemn hour of midnight he would arise and go out alone and silently—except a slight noise he made with his fingers, intended to frighten away any evil shades that might be inclined to gather about him. He would pass on through the darkness until he came to a fountain, in which he would wash his hands three times. He then turned homeward, casting behind him as he went some black figs he carried in his mouth, while he uttered three times, without looking behind him, the following words, "With these figs do I ransom myself and my family." After a short silence, he would exclaim,

Paternal Manes, Lemures, deities of the lower world, depart from this abode!" Fires were then kindled in all parts of the dwelling and the ceremony was ended.

A general festival to the dead, Dii Manes, took place in February. The festival continued for eleven days, during which time the temples were closed and no marriages were allowed to be celebrated. Presents were carried to the graves of the departed, and repasts and libations offered. The gifts varied from the rich presents

and sumptuous feasts of the wealthy to the simplest of tributes from the poor, who could frequently give only a little salt, flour mixed with wine, or a few violets strewn about over the grave.

After the offerings to the dead, made by the "hands of piety and affection," the living friends and relations met and held feasts of love and peace, at which quarrels and disputations, if any such existed, were settled, and all entered anew into bonds of good-will and fraternity.

AUNTIE.

APRIL'S FOOL.

A GIRL with a brilliant smile, a smile for the sake of whose irradiating charm one forgave the curiously oblique brows, the somewhat unsymmetrical nose, the large mouth—all but the deep gray eyes, which needed no forgiveness.

"What a little country rustic it is! Come out of your corner, Marian, and enjoy life." The speaker was a tall, slight girl, who, leaning on the arm of her companion, paused a moment in her promenade after the dance to speak to her friend; the scene, a ball-room gay with flashing lights and women's beautiful toilettes.

"O Nell! I am enjoying life; it's all so new to me. Why won't you let me stay in my corner and look on?"

"What have you done with the irresistible Mr. Smith, whom I presented to you a half hour since?"

"He went away. I guess I did not talk to him. I suppose it was very rude," said Marian, penitently and with a rueful glance in the direction of the vanished swain.

The young man at Helen Travers' side spoke a few words in her ear. She laughed lightly. "Capital! So I will. Now, Marian, you must do better next time. I am going to introduce to you a

very charming person, quite an eligible *parti*!"—a ripple of amusement crossing her face—"and am anxious to see what impression you can produce. Do, Mr. Seguin, bring up your friend!"

"Here he is," said Dick Seguin, laying his hand on the shoulder of a passer-by; "Matt, let me present you to my friend, Miss Nevin."

"I did not catch the name," said Marian, bending forward at Dick Seguin's muttered words.

"Oh! Carman!"

"I beg your pardon," and she bowed to the stout, dark young man who stood facing her. It was a curious, unfamiliar type of face, she thought, unlike any one she had ever seen in her quiet country home. He was not handsome, certainly, but there was a pleasant, intelligent expression about his black eyes which was attractive.

Helen Travers moved on.

"What a good joke! A splendid April fool," Marian heard her say, and wondered vaguely what she might mean.

"Is Mr. Seguin an old friend of yours?" she asked of her companion.

"We are class-mates in college," the young man answered. "He is not an old friend, though my oldest friend there."

"And Miss Travers?" Marian pursued.

"I have the honor of being slightly acquainted with Miss Travers."

He spoke slowly, deliberately, and with a refined accent. Marian's eyes wandered.

"Please forgive me if I don't look at you," she said, frankly; "it is all so beautiful and so new to me. I have never been to a large ball in a city before, and I do so like to see it."

"A fair barbarian," he thought, but her honesty pleased him.

"New to you," he said; "I am surprised at that. You seem so perfectly in your place with these surroundings!"

Something in the tone conveyed a compliment, and she was not yet hardened to flattering speeches. She looked at him, blushed, and stammered slightly.

"But really it is; I have lived all my life in a country town, and it is only lately that Helen has asked me here."

"To complete the charm of the occasion," he said, in his quiet, even tones.

She flashed a quick glance at him.

"Now I know you are laughing at me. I am not foolish enough to think I am either pretty or charming."

"To be unconscious of both is the greatest attraction of all, sometimes."

This third compliment was too much for her.

"Oh! that's enough," she cried. "Had not you better quit?"

"Quit?" said he, looking slightly puzzled. "Ah! yes, to quit is to go away. It is as you say," and, bowing low, he left her.

"Oh! what have I done? What have I done?" cried she. "He thought I meant to send him away. Mr. Carman! Mr. Carman!" she called, but he was beyond hearing.

"Oh! what a blunder in me! What shall I do? First that Mr. Smith, and now this one, who was so nice and gentlemanly. What will Helen think of me?"

and she turned in genuine distress to seek her cousin.

Dick Seguin greeted her somewhat incoherent story with shouts of laughter, and Helen in a quieter way was scarcely less amused. "You are the freshest and most charming thing I have encountered in some time," she said, giving her cousin an affectionate little pat.

"I don't wonder he was captivated and made pretty speeches to you. If you only preserve this naive frankness, I prophesy you will be the success of the season. Fancy telling a man you did not want to look at him and to go away!" But poor Marian could not see so much in the joke as her cousin and Mr. Seguin. Their merriment seemed to her disproportioned to the occasion, and though she laughed good-naturedly herself, she was less sorry than she might otherwise have been when her first ball came to an end.

The April days had shone and showered, Marian's visit was over; after a couple of months at home, she had come with her family to spend a few weeks at a seaside resort. The ocean was new to her, new and beautiful, and she never tired of sitting on the sand watching the breakers roll in. She had one favorite spot where, in the shadow of an old life-boat, she was screened from view and could enjoy the picture spread before her with uninterrupted delight.

Lost in a sort of waking dream, she was sitting here one afternoon when she heard a party slowly approaching.

"Well, sir!" cried a gay voice, "you've loaded the sea and the coast with quotations, now give us something with a little humanity in it. For example, on those small reprobates, my cousins, Fred and Mary, digging in the sand over there."

Marian peered round the corner of her screen, and saw the well-known faces of two children whose devotion to making sand-pits was as untiring as her own pleasure in looking at the water.

"Facendo i lor amati e freddi e molli
Sempre me stanno innanzi,"

quoted the even and unforgetten tones of a man's voice. There was a shout of laughter, and Marian, oblivious of the fact that she was better hidden as she sat, sprang to her feet. The speaker, one of a group of young men, came quickly forward, the others fell back.

"O Mr. Carman! I did not think you would remember me."

"It was impossible to forget," he said, with a smile of evident pleasure.

She blushed. "I think perhaps I owe you an apology. I was so stupid that night. I did not mean to send you away."

"I understand better now. I will not be dismissed so easily. May I sit down here beside you?"

"Why, surely," she answered, "if you would like to. It is not my sand or my ocean, much as I love it."

"It is yours to refuse me the pleasure of enjoying it with you, but I hope you will not."

"You say pleasant things and you say them very pleasantly," she said, giving him the frank, bright smile which was her greatest charm as they sat down. "I thought that when I saw you before, and I like pleasant things when I can believe people mean them."

"The pleasantest thing of all is that you find them so," was the rejoinder, "and I do but lack opportunity to add to their number." So they talked.

"You have not told me anything about yourself, your home, or your family," she said, after awhile, "and I have told you about all my home folks—my mother is with me here now."

He answered with a certain evasion, as the honest, gray eyes looked into his, that he was from the West, and his father a Government official.

"From the West!" she echoed, in surprise. "Well, to be sure, I don't know much of Western people, except my Cousin Tom, but you are not at all like what I thought them."

He had not been quite open with her, and it gave him an uncomfortable feeling. He rose. "We shall meet often, I hope, but I must not trespass too long now, or delay indefinitely to report myself to the friends with whom I came down here."

At a summer resort meetings between friends and acquaintances are frequent, and the intercourse thus begun grew and prospered. Helen Travers too, with her now declared lover, Mr. Seguin, joined her aunt's party.

"Marian, do you remember Augusta Burnet?" Helen said one day, as the four strolled on the beach together.

"Oh! yes."

"Well," the former continued, "I have just had a letter announcing her engagement to a German count. You know they have been abroad for some time."

"Why are American girls so fond of marrying foreigners?" Marian exclaimed, with some vehemence. "I don't believe in it. I think they ought to marry their own countrymen."

Dick Seguin broke out into his ready laugh.

"But a count, you know."

"A duke would be all the same," the girl answered.

"Matt, that's hard on you," said Dick.

A dark flush mounted to the young man's brow. For the moment the thought of his native land was odious to him.

"Mr. Carman, what have I said?" cried Marian, in distress. "Are you a foreigner? I did not know it."

"An alineated one," put in Helen Travers.

"Oh! I remember the first day I saw you here you quoted something about Mollie and Freddy Bent in Italian or Latin, I did not know which. Are you an Italian?"

"Come," Dick whispered to Helen, "let us leave before the denouement. Matters may get too serious for us if we remain," and they walked off laughing.

They chanced to be near the old lifeboat, and the other two sat down in si-

lence beside it. An unvoiced agitation lay between them. The girl was a trifle paler than her wont; the man when he spoke presently made evident effort.

"Then I suppose there is no hope for me, though I have learned to love you as the men in your country love?"

"I don't understand," she said, faintly.

"My name is Matsuro Kaimoni. I am a Japanese, and what was once my pride seems now a cruel fate," he answered. "At first I thought you knew—later I feared to tell you. Something about your face reminded me of my own people, and that night you first sent me away I thought it all right, for such is our custom. I have learned to care for you so much. Can you give me no hope?"

"I don't know. Let me have time," she almost gasped. "I feel so bewildered."

"I would wait a lifetime," he said, with grave respect, "if you would ever answer me as I wish. A month, a year hence, as you say, I will come again."

"Dick," it was Helen Travers who spoke, as he and she an hour or two later again wandered by the shore in the gathering twilight, "I am afraid we have done harm with our April fooling. I found Marian in tears. O' Dick! You don't think she really cares for him?"

"There's no accounting for tastes, but he's a good fellow, barring the difference of nationality."

"But—that is *such* a bar—O Dick! I wish you hadn't done it!"

E. LEIGH NORTH.

"THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT."

"IT'S a magnificent scheme," announced John Alfred Rollins, rising to his feet and striding up and down the room with sovereign tread. "People—your people, Elsie—will have to acknowledge that your husband can match the best of them in business sagacity and foresight."

"I—always said so," proudly responded John Alfred's wife, following with admiring eyes the somewhat pompous figure swinging with practiced ease between her dainty parlor furnishings, arranged with a view to these daily pedestrian exercises, attuned to the music of new enterprises from time to time.

"There's only one thing to hinder making this venture one of the grandest successes ever witnessed in the business world," said the prospective conqueror, pausing before his sympathetic listener.

"Yes?" she assented, timidly, awaiting the explanation.

"And that is—CAPITAL!" was the startling announcement.

"Ah!" gasped Elsie, in dismay over the

"one thing" which in a thousand Protean shapes had frustrated so many magnificent schemes.

"Yes—*capital*, Elsie. That is all that is needed to make me an independently wealthy man—the equal of any of your scornful Spencers, who have always looked down on me. It is so absurd to be thwarted by so small an impediment—always!"

"Ah, indeed!" responded Elsie, following with eager sympathy the majestic figure again making its devious circuit of the room.

"But there *is* a way," he resumed, stopping midway in his turn toward the starting point; "there is a way by which this grand scheme may be put in operation."

"Yes?" interrogated the wife, shrinking with some premonition of sacrifice—for John Alfred had indulged in a succession of grand schemes before this. Each one had demanded the same absurd and insignificant item—capital. Under the

pressing need of such a base accessory to the accomplishment of his plans, Elsie had said to him with true help-meet generosity, "There is that last little amount deposited in the bank for me by father," or "There is the remnant of my inheritance from Aunt Margaret," or (this would be after some flush of success in business enterprises) "There is that little sum I have saved by my thrifty management in the household expenses, you know." And there had never been much loss of time in putting these motor powers to the front of John Alfred's rainbow schemes, which usually burst like brilliant soap bubbles, leaving the bedazzled Elsie gazing blankly into a disappointing vacancy that quickly became the field of other airy speculations blown from John Alfred's fertile imagination. But there was no longer any material power to harness to these cloud chariots. There was absolutely nothing left but the house, which had been Elsie's wedding-gift from her father, and dearer to her than her heart's blood, since that father was gone. "Yes?" she repeated her dazed interrogation, seeing her husband still standing with impressive silence before her.

"I'll tell you," he said, laying his hand on her shoulder with love's compelling power; "there is one thing we can do to insure us at last an independent fortune, Elsie."

"Yes?" she faintly assented, blanching under his earnest, intent gaze.

"And that it is to take up with the offer lately made by Davis, who has long had a covetous eye on our place—"

"Oh! no; no! no!" groaned Elsie, with a spasm of pain, "Oh! no; no!" she repeated, glancing around with adoring eyes on the familiar walls, endeared by associations sacred to the heart womanly.

The man's hand fell from her shoulder, and he drew himself up with a magnificently offended yet forbearing air.

"Please don't blame me, Jack dear," she pleaded, "but you know how precious

this blessed home is to me. Here we began our married life—here little Spencer was born, and—and here he died." The speaker choked, and came to an abrupt stop in her enumeration of endearing home attachments.

"You women are so sentimental," said John Alfred, sententiously.

"Ah, Jack dear," sobbed the offender, stretching out a hand, which was coldly touched.

"You know," said Jack, "there are a thousand things about the place that we wish different every day of our lives. In parting with it we should be just simply merging our incomplete ideal of a home in one that should, a little later, fill absolutely our conceptions of what a home should really be. But you, with a woman's inconsistency, object to losing a haven for a palace!"

"O Jack!" There was an accent of reproach in this exclamation mingled with admiration of the figurative speech, in which the fancy of John Alfred indulged.

To consent to his bold proposition was, however, impossible, and for several days the subject was not renewed, and a strange, chilling, rain-moistened atmosphere pervaded Elsie's usually bright, wholesome kingdom of home.

The husband went about with a lofty, injured air, and the wife brooded and brooded over the matter, which was not for an instant out of her thought.

No friend could be admitted to her confidence and counsel—least of all her own people. She knew too well how firm would be the universal decision against the assent to which she felt herself slowly drifting. She flattered herself with the delusion of free will in the case, and felt the dignity of an unbiased choice, yet she knew perfectly well the fatal necessity of final consent to her husband's wish.

For how was it possible to deny the will of a man whose plans, though baffled at times, alas! were destined to certain

achievement in the end? Had not a great soothsayer declared that John Alfred Rollins was born to success?

There were to be a few failures, which had now come to pass, but the magic number at last was reached and success in later undertakings was assured.

In due season, therefore, to the infinite disgust of friends and relatives, Elsie's home was converted into "capital" and speedily invested in the dazzling stocks of the great "Saskatchewan," upon which John Alfred had ciphered until he knew to the remotest decimal the vast and ever-increasing fortune that was to result from the venture—if a thing so assured could be called a venture.

In the cheap boarding-house to which they removed—"for a short time only," of course—Elsie felt keenly the sacrifice of the home comfort and protection to which she had been forced (though the sacrifice had been made in seeming freedom of choice), but with brave repression of regret she dwelt in her husband's brilliant hopes and saw by the light of anticipation a future more satisfying than the past by so much as it satisfied her dear Jack.

Every day he came in with glowing reports of the splendid prospects nearing their swift fulfillment in the wonderful dividends of the magic "Saskatchewan," and it was about as much as one loving imagination could do to plan the expenditure of money that was presently to roll in a golden tide upon the waiting recipients, who found it, indeed, a little enervating to have nothing to do except to wait; at least so it appeared to Elsie, though the action of inquiry and speculation, combined with the odds and ends of business that he picked up to keep the wheels of life moving, saved John Alfred from stagnation in his period of "hope deferred."

But the time came when all these odds and ends appeared to play out, and there was positively not a dollar to meet the forthcoming board-bills. Heretofore Elsie

had found her sweetest comfort in contemplating and improving upon the plans of the grand new house which John Alfred was continually presenting for her inspection and approval, and together they had spent hours and hours in adjusting the details of their prospective home to the entire satisfaction of each. Everything had been duly considered and arranged. The palatial building loomed up in the fancy of each with a magnificent splendor of proportion and adornment as gratifying to their sense as would be the reality, which they confidently expected to take possession of at the earliest possible day after the maturing of the "Saskatchewan" stocks. The site for the new home was already selected, and artisans engaged for a time not distinctly, but very soon to be, specified.

But here, meantime, came the pressing exigency of the board-bills. Something would have to be done.

There were a few reserved household luxuries which might be disposed of in prospect of the greater endowments of fortune awaiting them, but the slow developments of the Saskatchewan—which its name did not indicate—imposed a present necessity which could not be shirked.

Various measures of relief were canvassed without satisfying conclusions, but Elsie at length settled the vexed question by a bold proposition.

"I will open a—BOARDING-HOUSE."

Nothing less than soaring capitals would express the dignity of this announcement.

"My wife!" exclaimed John Alfred, starting to his feet in indignant protestation. "Think what the Spencers would say."

Elsie winced. "Oh! I've thought about that already. I've got beyond thinking what my people will say. Now—"

"Elsie, if there was any need of you doing anything," considered Jack, walking meditatively up and down before her—

"just for pastime while we are waiting, you know, why, there's painting or music or embroidery and other such refined womanly accomplishments to which I might not object, but—"

"Yes—yes—I know how you feel, Jack, dear," brightly responded the young woman; "but see here! I can't argue you know, but it is the useful which succeeds, and since people *will* eat and *must* eat, why, there's some certainty of employment for those who feed them, don't you know?"

"But an employment very low and degrading, my wife," explained John Alfred, loftily.

"Oh! I don't think so, Jack, dear," protested Mrs. Rollins. "You know people can do without painting and music and other such fine arts. It's better to do without them unless they can be had from the best masters. But to live is a necessity, and with my housekeeping gift—you've praised it yourself, Jack, dear—I know I could make a score of people happy in the refreshments of a home a great deal more comforting and cheerful than this. I've been thinking of it ever since I've been here, and seen how much is lacking just in the home-making spirit of the institution. Our landlady doesn't know how, or she is too selfish to make her household happy. The loss of my home teaches me how to make a home for others. Dear me! I didn't know I was talking so fast, Jack, dear—"

"For Heaven's sake, Elsie," exclaimed the frowning John Alfred, "don't say anything more about the loss of your home. It grieves me! Don't you realize that it is only a loss which insures a higher gain? Don't you know that the poor, cramped, squalid, insignificant house that we left is soon to be succeeded by one that will more completely and magnificently meet our higher needs?"

"Yes—yes—" granted Elsie, overwhelmed by the lofty reasoning that she never tried to disprove; "but meantime

you know, Jack, dear, I feel that I have a—a—what shall I call it?"

"A mission, do you want to say?" suggested "Jack, dear," condescendingly.

"Yes, a mission to make a real home for people who, like ourselves, have no—beg pardon—" apologized the eager home maker as her husband turned rebukingly again from her implied reproach. "You know I mean all right. I have been learning so much that I want to put to practice—"

"Very well," assented John Alfred Rollins, with cold majesty—"I have nothing more to say."

And so the plan conceived was put in speedy execution, as the exigencies of the situation certainly demanded action of some sort. The great strategist consented to lend the dignity of his name to the movement, but disdainfully submitted all details to Elsie, who was the inspired motive power of the new venture.

She too suffered from that "absurd" yet sore hindrance to success which had so often baffled John Alfred—*capital*—but she spelled the word in small italics.

By the sacrifice of a fine watch, which she had valued as a birthday gift from her father, she was able to secure the month's rent of a desirable house in a locality suited to her project. And here, by advertisement and personal favor, she contrived to lure a fair regiment of homeseekers, who were glad to bring along their small Lares and Penates and set them up in domestic fashion, in the pleasant rooms which she, with ready tact, adjusted to the tastes of each, supplementing from her own retained household treasures whatever might be lacking to give the magic home touch; for the peculiar and heavenly gift of this self-appointed landlady was the ability to diffuse a domestic atmosphere through all the surroundings subject to her control, and she became the presiding genius and tutelary goddess in the floating ark of home which was launched on the waves

of her own uncertainty. She had learned by her enforced experience in homelessness the needs which she aspired to supply, and by quick instinct and subtle sympathy she entered into the life of her composite household, and, divining the reasonable pleasure of each, she aimed to compass the happiness of all. Not, indeed, that she analyzed her method or consciously studied her processes. She had no theories at all. Happily, she had no prejudices, and she gave herself to the new work with a devotion and a determination to win that would have insured a fair degree of success even in the absence of peculiar qualifications.

It was not just clear to her mind how the material requirements of the very first day were to be met, but she faced the situation bravely, and by some marvelous inspiration of faith and prescience of "coming events," the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker responded to her present needs, and the ready support of her delighted patrons put her speedily upon a paying basis, which secured ease of mind, and laid, by wise management, the foundations of assured prosperity.

"It isn't that there is any necessity at all for such an enterprise," John Alfred explained to the people, "but my wife has such a passion for entertaining, you know. She is only happy when she has a crowd of guests at her table. After a little I am going to install her in a veritable palace of her own in which she will be able to entertain sumptuously on a plan quite different from the present—ha! ha!

Perhaps you don't know we have large capital invested in the Saskatchewan stocks, which are going to yield a princely revenue after awhile. The operations are slightly delayed by some unexpected contingencies, but there's no doubt about the final results. The profits are simply 'immense.'"

"My Jack," Mrs. Rollins would say to her friends, has such a genius—if that is what you would call it—for speculation. He never loses faith in anything he undertakes. His schemes are magnificent and cannot fail in the end, but meantime we have to do something to make both ends meet, don't you see? It will all come out right by and by."

It did.

The "palace" was built, not exactly after the plans which had been canvassed by Jack and Elsie in the earlier and more glowing prospects of their "investment," but in a style commensurate with the real and ideal needs of the joint stock company, composed of Mrs. Rollins's boarding-house patrons, who declare her elected for life as Matron of the Co-operative Home, which one of the founders facetiously but significantly names "The Saskatchewan."

Here the devoted and believing wife rekindles the altar of the home that she lost—and here John Alfred still majestically paces up and down before her, expatiating on the magnificent results that would accrue under his skilled manipulation of one important but missing factor—CAPITAL.

A. L. MUZZEY.

CHAMP.*

BY

M. G. McCLELLAND.

CHAPTER VI.

IN the hall Captain Chalmers met me. He opened the parlor door, and stood aside to let me enter.

"Come in here and 'rest your bonnet,' as the mountain-folks say down in Virginia," he smiled. "It's a long time since we have had the pleasure of a visit from you, Mrs. Winn. Annie will be delighted. She's interviewing the doctor now, but she'll be through directly. Let me help you with your wraps. I'm as handy as a woman. I quite pride myself upon it. Now, take the big blue chair and put your feet on a hassock. Is that comfortable? 'Twas built after an idea of my own, and is warranted to fit any back, like a ready-made coat. How have you been this long time?"

"Wonderfully well, thank you"—as I yielded him my wraps. "And Annie? She spoke of being poorly. I hope it's nothing serious."

He turned from the piano, on which he was piling my wrappings, and took a step toward me, with rather a troubled expression on his face.

"Did she—" he hesitated—"did she say anything particular—about developments in her case, and all that?" He paused abruptly, and stood looking at me.

Then I noticed that his manner was nervous and his expression preoccupied.

"She mentioned an experiment she was trying, and spoke of an 'adept,'" I replied; "that was all. Captain, what is an 'adept'?" I'm floundering in a sea of perplexity. I thought it was something religious: had to do with 'higher development,' and 'astral light,' and—and—"projecting" things," winding up vaguely,

but trying to put more intelligence into my countenance than there was in my mind.

The Captain drew a chair opposite to me and sat down. His gay, *insouciant* face, with its merry eyes and military mustache, was filled with an expression of doubt and perplexity that was comical in its incongruity.

"Are 'adepts' intangible?"

The query was idly put; but I could see that he was restless and ill at ease, and it occurred to me that talking would be a relief. Words to a nervous man can be what tears are to a nervous woman—a vent for surplus emotion.

"Intangible as the devil! There, I beg your pardon!" with a comical sidelong glance. "I forgot myself. The fact is, Mrs. Winn, I'm all broken up and torn to pieces! I'm doing a thing which my reason tells me is asinine folly, and yet I keep on doing it. If I could only foresee the end! If I could only be *sure* that my efforts for good would not result in irremediable harm! But there's the rub!"

"This experiment?" I ventured.

"Yes, I feel like a man playing poker, with everything he owns in the world dependent on the fall of a card. Sometimes I wish I'd never heard of the thing—and yet, if it *should* do good! I've a good mind to make a clean breast of it to you, Mrs. Winn. Outside testimony would be a help. It would even be a comfort to be convicted of idiocy."

To secure a man's confidence there is not much required save sympathetic attention, and eyes that do not wander. I turned my face toward Captain Chalmers and waited.

* Copyright, 1887, by M. G. McCLELLAND.

"You asked me just now about adepts," he began, "whether they were religious or anti-religious or something of that sort. Bless your soul, *I* don't know! I've never gone in for anything occult or imaginative, I'm not spiritually minded enough. There's a fellow in the regiment, though, could tell you all about it. He is immense on transcendentalism and psychical investigation and a lot of things that an ordinary fellow can't get a grip on. In reality, I don't suppose he *knows* anything, or can *prove* anything, or, indeed, that any of them can. But he's got a vigorous imagination, in first-rate working order, an infinite capacity for absorbing other people's imaginings, and the gift of expression. Jove! How that fellow can talk! Interestingly too, even to a man who hasn't brain enough to take in half he says. It's Burton, our first lieutenant. We'll have him in to meet you some day, if you like. He's the brainiest fellow in the Fort, but an utter crank."

"And interesting, you say."

"Tremendously so; and, what's worse, he's plausible. He'll prance you all around Robin Hood's barn in an argument, and get you so twisted up and muddled and mentally convoluted that you'll find yourself assuming positions which your reason tells you are untenable, and embracing theories which the same monitor pronounces sheer tomfoolery. Ever since he joined, two months ago, I've been vibrating between hailing him as a prophet and thirsting to kick him for the veriest ass that ever brayed. He's at the bottom of this—this," casting about for a word, "*mess* I'm making. Those women, you know." He jerked his head backward in the direction of his wife's room.

"Are *they* adepts?"

I tried to put the query with the seriousness which the occasion seemed to demand, but my eyes must have betrayed amusement and a slight feeling of revulsion, for the Captain gave me a swift, deprecatory glance and replied, hastily:

"No. That was Annie's mistake. They are 'healers,' or call themselves so. There's a proper technical name for the thing, but out-of-the-way terminology is beyond me. You must have seen accounts of the 'mind-cure,' or 'faith-cure,' craze. The papers have been full of it. These women practice it. Burton believes in these things like a Hindoo fakir. He got talking to me about it a fortnight since for Annie, and was so earnest and enthusiastic that he infected *me*; then he talked to Annie and urged it on her. Annie laughed the thing to scorn at first; but Burton persisted, and the long and short of the matter is that we both concluded to make the experiment. You know how it is with my poor girl. We've exhausted the regular practice and all established methods; science and skill are powerless, knowledge and experience confess themselves baffled. This thing has offered—it may do good—it may not; 'but drowning men will catch at straws.' His voice had a ring of pain.

"*Has* it done good, so far?"

Involuntarily, as I put the question, my tone softened. To me the experiment seemed midsummer madness, for we *knew* the case to be hopeless. But I could understand and sympathize with his feeling. Even the shadow of hope must be alluring.

"It's too soon to expect definite results in a case like hers. This is only the second visit the women have paid her. What troubles me is dread of a reaction. They work through the mind, the imagination, and stimulate the latent force in her by contact with the active force in them. Their will dominates hers, and, like a skillful general, calls out the reserves to man the breach. That's understandable, at least. But here's the rub. These women can't *live* with Annie. I hear that they will return to India in the spring. When the commanding officer shall be withdrawn will the reserve be strong enough to hold the post? That is what I doubt. And

roul then would simply mean laying down arms forever."

He involuntarily used the language of his profession; it is a trick men have who follow the trade to which nature has adapted them. They clothe their thought in the words the bent of their mind suggests, and that which in others would be metaphor, in them is true expression.

His air was so dejected and his voice so troubled that I hastened to administer such comfort as suggested itself.

"Don't look on the dark side," I smiled cheerfully; "what if it should be charlatany? Wasn't what we call charlatany good science in past ages, and has anybody a right to say it won't be again? We live in circles and swing around them endlessly. The influence of mind over matter is established, and who is learned enough to set limits to its action? Be encouraged! Psychical research has demonstrated the existence of a spiritual force operating through laws of which, as yet, we know next to nothing. I don't believe in 'faith-cures' myself, but, like many improbable things, I admit them to be possible. The essential thing, I should say, would be the *faith*. Does Annie believe in it?"

"She *hopes* in it, and she is interested. I let it go on for that reason. Poor girl! it's hard lines on her lying there day after day, chained like a log to that couch. And her patience and cheerfulness don't make it less hard."

I put out my hand and stroked his sleeve.

"Hope with her," I suggested; "it will be better so. Perhaps it may be a foolish thing you are doing, but if we were wise all the time our poor brains would ossify."

The Captain's eyes twinkled roguishly.

"Ossification must have commenced in that pretty little head of yours then," quoth he, gayly. "Within the last ten minutes the symptoms of wisdom displayed by you have been alarming. Where did

it come from? Is it native or only a naturalized importation?"

A *moue* rewarded the impertinence.

"It is the reserve of force called into action by the magnetic influence of military depression," I announced. "There, I'm breathless! Isn't that Annie's bell? Perhaps the incantations are over."

Captain Chalmers rose.

"In that case these women must have some refreshment before they go back to the city. Shall I bring them in here? The younger woman is the celebrated Madame Silva. Perhaps you'd like to meet her."

"God forbid!" I exclaimed, a feeling of revulsion sweeping over me. "I'll go in the study till Annie is ready for me."

The Captain broke into a roar of laughter.

"If you could see your face," he cried. "I believe you are frightened out of your wits this moment. You look as if I were going to bring dynamite bombs into the room instead of a couple of harmless and respectable females. Here you are, though!" throwing open the study door; "fly while yet there is time. You are a goose, Mrs. Winn, pure and simple."

He smiled indulgently and I smiled back at him, and made my escape right willingly. The women might be harmless—doubtless were—but that episode with the horses troubled me.

Presently Mrs. Chalmers sent for me to her room. She was lying on her sofa, but lifted higher on the pillows than I had ever seen her. Her eyes were brilliant and there was a spot of color in each cheek, and yet she did not seem excited. She welcomed me with her own sweet smile, and pointed to a chair a little in front of her.

"Sit where I can see you," she said, smiling. "It's so long since I've had that pleasure, that I feel like telling you that you 'sut'n'ly has grow'd,' like the old darkies at your Southern home. It's good to see you again, my dear. Where have you been this long time?"

She chatted gayly on, apparently in the highest spirits, and, falling into her mood, I felt my own spirits rise in unison. Once I essayed some inquiry about her health, but she checked it with uplifted finger.

"Guy has been talking to you," she said, "so you know that I'm under treatment. Part of the system is that I am not to speak, or even think, about my health at all. It is to be, as far as practicable, a thing without existence. I am to keep myself bright and happy and amused, and believe myself well, as the preliminary step toward being well."

This sounded so feasible and matter-of-fact, so judicious and reasonable, that I was acutely disappointed. There was nothing occult in advice like this—no necromancy, no incantations, no manifestation of supernatural power. It was plain, flat-footed common-sense, such as might have been enunciated by the most orthodox of family physicians. As usual, my face betrayed me, and Mrs. Chalmers replied to my thought.

"Science failed to inspire hope," she said; "imagination has, at least, done that much for me. Now let us talk of other things."

Captain Chalmers must have received like instruction to those given his wife, for when he joined us he made no allusion to Madame Silva or her companion, and the subject of the experiment was tacitly ignored during the rest of my visit.

In the afternoon I played for them all the tender, sympathetic music I could recall, and under its spell the unnatural brilliance faded out of Mrs. Chalmers's eyes and she fell into slumber, from which she awakened refreshed. I was still at the piano when Mr. Morris came in. He waived an introduction as superfluous, and extended his hand as to a friend; then he added his entreaties to those of the others that I should not stop; so I played on for them until the shadows began to lengthen. And when the time for departure came, Annie begged so earnestly

that I should remain with her for the night that I consented, intrusting Mr. Morris with a telegram for my servants, and vaguely relieved, and at the same time vaguely disappointed, that I would not make the return trip under his protection.

CHAPTER VII.

DURING the weeks that followed I saw a good deal of little Champ. Her father kept his promise and sent her to see me under the charge of her nurse, a stout, good-natured Swiss, the niece of the bird-fancier. My affection for the wee maid deepened under the charm of her sweet ways and innocent presence, and my desire to keep her with me always intensified. Insensibly I strove to make her love me, depend on me, yearn for me when absent. I taught her to call me by my name, and tried to make her visits to me the events of her little life.

"Does she talk of me, or fret after me at all?" I inquired of the nurse. "Does she seem disappointed when you don't bring her to see me?"

It had grown to be a habit for the baby to come three or four times a week when the weather would permit. I took care that the visits should be made as pleasant for the nurse as for the child. My maid was a Swiss, and from the same canton; the women liked to talk of home.

"Yes, madame. That is, she frets not often, being a child of good pleasantness; but of you she chatters—chatters like the sparrow-birds. Used I to say, 'Be tranquil, *mon enfant*, and you shall see the birds.' Now I say 'be a good child and you shall go to the dear lady.'" The girl spoke with precision, and deep joy in her English.

Champ was on the hearth-rug, with my work-basket, a kitten, and three picture-books beside her. Between her busy fingers and the kitten's paws, the basket was in a sad state, but there was no doubt

about the baby's enjoyment. She looked up roguishly and showed all her pretty white teeth in a conciliatory smile.

"Her father doesn't object to her coming so often, I hope?"

The observation was born of belated compunction. The effort to lure away his child touched my conscience just enough to make me anxious to establish in my own mind a conviction of the father's indifference.

"Ah! no, madame. How is that possible? Monsieur Morris he is away all the day long, perhaps, and the little one she is with me. When first monsieur told me to bring the child to you, he said, 'If she is good, and the lady wishes, you may take her again.' Since then nothing—save once, 'Is the child good?' and again, 'Does the lady seem pleased?' Then I told him that nowhere did Champ so well conduct herself, and that the dear lady loved her and would gladly keep her always if she might."

The girl's penetration surprised me, but I let it pass. It might prove the thin end of the wedge, and it would be better, anyhow, to let Mr. Morris grow familiar with the idea of my infatuation for the child before I should make a definite move.

"What said he to that?"

I bent forward and lifted the child in my arms as I spoke.

"Not anything, madame. He is a man of much quietness, is monsieur. He took the baby in his arms, as madame has just done, and laid her little head against his breast."

This picture did not please me at all. On the contrary, it gave me an uncomfortable feeling of selfishness and brutality. The lonely room, with its suggestions of what had been, and the lonely man, with his child in his arms, presented themselves to my mind's eye with disagreeable vividness. I had no wish to feel sorry for Mr. Morris; I wanted my compassion for myself. As an antidote, I recalled what the lives of men might be and often

were in a great city, and decided for the hundredth time that girl-children should be under the care of women. After that I forbore to question the girl, and held all recognition of paternal rights in abeyance.

It is needless to state that the affair was of absorbing interest to Myra Yorke. I made a virtue of necessity and took her into my confidence, knowing that if I should not she would speedily find it all out for herself. At first she was disposed to regard the thing with aversion, and to be jealous of little Champ. But I contrived to leave them alone together one day, and the baby subjugated her, as she did every one who came within her sphere.

"In the classic language of the ring, I 'throw up the sponge,'" announced Myra. "The gods be thanked! I know when I'm beaten, so get a chance to retreat in good order. I've done my duty in the opposition, too, so when the family missiles begin to fly I've got a shield to guard me. Work out your own salvation, my dear, or your own destruction, as the event shall prove. This idea of adoption has been in solution in your mind a good long time. I suppose it was obliged to crystallize sooner or later. This baby is a charming specimen, and she comes of decent people, and not too many of them, for all of which mercies be we truly thankful."

Myra sat on the floor with her hair in a cloud around her, and little Champ stood behind her, with an ivory brush and three twisted hair-pins, inflicting torture with laudable intentions.

"The thing I most dislike," proceeded Myra, "is sharing credit with the monkey. Tom (may his father's grave be defiled) and I rang up the curtain on this drama, to be sure, but the monkey was the active agent in the development of the plot. If Mr. Morris should give you Champ, you ought to add the monkey to the family too; common gratitude demands it. And I don't know but that the snakes have a claim as well."

"Don't!" I shuddered.

"Well, perhaps I'll remit the snakes; but if Champ comes here, so shall the monkey. Now tell me about the father. What manner of man is he, viewed dispassionately?"

"Ugly," I replied, with animation, "very ugly. He has the very worst built nose I ever beheld on a mortal's face. It's positively *sui generis*, a marvel among noses."

"And by his nose shall man be judged. We have Imperial precedent. But of his character, disposition, inner man, what opinion did you form?"

"He's kind, tender, and considerate," with grateful recollection of his goodness to me. "And he's thoughtful, too; can understand a woman, and enter into her feelings, and make allowance."

"That's bad!" commented Myra, "just as bad as ever it can be. Not for the man, of course, but for the project. A man such as you describe would *seethe* with natural affection."

My countenance fell.

"Never mind," suggested Myra, cheerfully, "he may be poor. He ought to be, living in a place like that. In which case all the big virtues will be so many levers to dislodge Champ. There's a nebulous haze about journalism in my mind from which, so far, I've only evolved an impression of men struggling to make ends meet, and dropping dead just as they were about to succeed."

My own ideas were scarcely more clear.

One morning Myra came in rather earlier than usual. She was on her way to the tailor, she explained, to have a habit fitted, and could only stay a few moments. She seated herself in a low basket chair, near the fire, and regarded me solemnly. I was dressing a doll for Champ, and shreds and scraps of ribbon, silk, and muslin lay in bright confusion on the table at my elbow. The wood fire glowed and crackled, and the merry flames mocked their images reflected in the brass andirons.

That Myra had something on her mind was evident, and presently I put the question for which she waited. She drew a long breath, and her mobile countenance assumed a dismal expression.

"In the presence of victory we must prepare for defeat," quoth she, sententiously. "Our heaviest gun is spiked. To descend to the vernacular, I'm terribly afraid that 'the jig's up.' Mr. Morris is an imposter! He's no poorer than you are—worse, he's a rising man, a man who is making his mark in his profession, a man who can command a big salary."

My hands settled down helplessly among the pretty pieces in my lap and consternation enthroned itself on my brow. The situation I had considered simple threatened to develop complexities for which I was unprepared.

"Who told you?" I gasped.

"Tom Murray. He is in New York on business and dined with us last night. Murray, of *The Linchpin*, Washington, you know. He's sister's cousin, but not related to me at all." Myra's color rose.

The explanation was superfluous. I knew all about Tom Murray, and was aware that "business" required his presence in New York with great regularity once a month.

"He has been the making of *The Linchpin*," proceeded Myra, irrelevantly, "putting in brains and capital when the paper was perishing for lack of both. He told me about it last night and it's immensely interesting—journalism, I mean. I never knew anything about it before, treated newspapers as though they just 'grow'd,' like Topsy. All this about Champ has put a new face on the mater."

"Your cousin knows Mr. Morris?"

"He isn't my cousin. But no matter. He knows all the newspaper men of any merit. I questioned him because of Champ. He asked at once if Mr. Morris's given name was Sydnor? I didn't know, but said 'yes' at a venture. Is it?" She paused.

I nodded assent. I had seen the name on a piece of paper in which an apron of Champ's had been wrapped.

"Well, then, he's the man Tom Murray knows. And he's way high up on the staff of *The Daily Jupiter*, here in New York—next to the chief, I think, and an authority on the tariff or political economy or both—unless they are parts of the same puzzle. He writes clever papers on deep questions for the magazines, too, and is altogether hatefully firm on his legs. Mr. Murray hooted at the idea of his being a poor man; says he can command what salary he likes. His wife had property too—a plantation in Virginia."

"That don't amount to anything," I observed, speaking from experience and knowledge of the snare which property in the South is prone to prove to an absentee owner.

"It's *something*," insisted Myra, "a *dernier ressort*, at all events. And if the mother is dead, the farm belongs to Champ. Don't you see how, vulgarly speaking, this 'cooks our goose'? Mr. Morris won't want *your* money for Champ when he can make plenty for her himself, and has this abominable farm in the background."

"What makes him live on — Street, if he can afford anything better?" I demanded, clinging to hope.

"Goodness! I don't know! Individual idiosyncrasy, perhaps, or a liking for birds, or the odor of guano. Probably the locality is convenient to his work or endeared by association. His married life may have been passed there."

My heart sank like lead, and my little girl (already the appropriative prefix had associated itself with her in my mind) seemed removed to an immeasurable distance. I thrust the doll and pretty scraps aside and clasped my hands together on my knees. A full realization of how much I had counted on my wealth to obtain for me my heart's desire came when the money had been proven valueless.

VOL. LVII.—24.

Myra turned her vivid face toward me and questioned suddenly—

"Do you see Mr. Morris often?"

"No," I replied, absently. "At least, I've seen him once since that first time. The meeting was accidental. He never comes here."

"He is a widower, I think." Myra's tone was even and impassive.

A sharp feeling of dissatisfaction touched me. I glanced across at her, but her face was like an unlettered page and her eyes were on the fire. The flames danced and coiled around the logs; a gust of wind swept through the street with a sighing murmur; the grayness of the atmosphere foreboded snow.

Myra rose and, observing that her appointment was overdue, kissed me and went her way.

CHAPTER VIII.

SUMMED into language, what does knowledge and experience amount to? To the multitude—much, perhaps; to the individual—very little. Life brings us into court each with his own case, for which there shall be no precedent. According to the strength that is in us, to our capacity for effort, responsibility, emotion, we make or mar, win or lose, the verdict.

And of the triumvirate, emotion sits supreme and holds the balance. Does justice rule, or reason? Not so; the casting vote is in the hands of feeling. To feeling all things revert; on feeling all things rest; it is the sub-soil, the under-current, the Jove behind the thunder. A crisis comes; shall knowledge or experience determine the result? An alarm is sounded; shall reason or justice take the field? No; rather will feeling leap from her fastness, and, with slogans of prejudice, snatch up the gauge of battle.

Experience is the growth of ages: with every birth feeling enters the world full grown. For the evolution of reason cen-

turies have been required—an infant will show feeling like a man.

My feeling in regard to Madame Silva, being utterly unreasonable, was stronger than anything I could bring against it. Since my visit to Staten Island I had encountered her twice—first in a street-car, and again at a lecture on Magnetic Influence, to which Myra dragged me—and on both these occasions the effect she had on me was precisely similar to that produced in the carriage. She exercised at once a powerful attraction and an equally powerful repulsion. The feelings came in waves, a flux and reflux that was exhausting. As yet I had never seen her face, for she went heavily veiled, and weird thoughts kept forming in my brain of the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan and of those mystic dwellers in the Temple whose countenance "the eye of man might not behold." The attraction, strange to say, was most pronounced when she was not looking at me; then she seemed an enigma that I wished to solve—a mystery which I yearned to unravel. When her eyes were on me I felt as though watched by an ambushed foe.

At the lecture I pointed her out to Myra. She sat just in front, but a little removed from us. The stout woman was with her, and I noticed that the chair at her other side was vacant.

Myra leaned forward and gazed at her earnestly.

"So that's the celebrated Madame Silva," she commented, "sitting in a fifty-cent chair and looking just like other people. I wonder why I always expect celebrities to be different? They never are. It's very disappointing. Should I ever become famous I will paint my nose sky-blue, wear a parti-colored wig, or, at least, demonstrate myself uniquely in my bonnet. Some outward and visible sign of the inward famousness there should be. Why, I've sat here fifteen minutes, and there hasn't even come 'a pricking i' my thumbs.' They say she's intensely mag-

netic, but I don't feel anything. Perhaps we're too far off for the electric influence. Let's get nearer."

"No!" I objected; "I don't want to. You are too fond of experiments. I shall stay where I am."

Myra turned her piquant face toward me.

"Do you know what I should like to do?" she demanded.

"No. What?"

"Put that woman on a couch and insulate the legs."

"That's been tried," I said, "and the subject nearly killed. Look, there's a gentleman making his way to her."

A tall man in uniform was pressing forward through the crowd. When he reached the seat beside Madame Silva he stood a moment facing us and glanced about. He had a keen, intellectual face, with a high, compressed forehead, and a clean-cut jaw, and his eyes and hair were as dark as the half-hour before dawn.

"Who can he be?" wondered Myra.

"Lieutenant Burton, of the Twenty-fourth. Captain Chalmers pointed him out to me over at the Fert. It is a face to be remembered."

"Yes," assented Myra, "a clever face, but self-sufficient and passionate. I don't like it."

Nor did I.

All through the lecture I watched the trio in front, and speedily divined that although the Lieutenant appeared to be on good terms with the elder woman and anxious to please both, Madame Silva took very little notice of him. She sat perfectly motionless, only I seemed to know that her hands were twisting and untwisting in her lap with that strange serpentine movement. Once she turned and for a second looked at me, her eyes, through the grayness of her veil, burning like embers under ashes. A shiver seized me like that which, according to the old superstition, comes when a careless foot treads on the place where we shall be buried.

When the lecture was over the three went away together.

To deny that I am superstitious would be idle. No imaginative woman born in the South, cradled and rocked in the arms of a colored "mammy," reared in intimate association during her most impressible years with a picturesque, ignorant, emotional race, can avoid being touched with a reflex of their earnest, trembling faith in the supernatural. It permeates the atmosphere of her daily life, colors the songs crooned over her cradle, the tales and legends with which her budding imagination is fed. By the time she can talk she knows the difference between good and bad luck and the signs that pertain to each. Instinctively she learns, as far as may be, to avoid the one and invoke the other, to regard the "signs" as manifestations of importance. "Quit, honey, dat's mighty bad luck!" is an admonition potent to withhold her from any undertaking, and the boundary between the visible and invisible seems so intangible that it may be crossed at pleasure from the hither side.

With knowledge and culture will come a theoretical certainty that such things are unworthy of credence and a day-light disbelief in them. Should the subject be broached, denial will be fluent and fervent; the impossibility of "warnings," "intuitions," "the evil eye," "prophetic dreams," or any mystic falling of the shadow of the future athwart the reality of the present will be demonstrated scientifically and otherwise. But let the house be silent and the room lonely, the hour approach midnight, and imagination get the reins on her neck, and the old influences, the first influences, will muster strong, and she will find that the dark thread logically proven to have been eliminated from the woof and warp of civilized life was woven into the web of hers ere ever she was big enough to enter protest.

Having admitted superstition, and, by

implication, an ill-regulated mind, it will surprise no one if I further admit that when a note came from Annie Chalmers inclosing one for Madame Silva, with the request that I should deliver it in person, I was more than a little troubled. Annie wrote hurriedly and wished the note to reach Madame Silva without delay—if possible, to have it given into her own hand. She explained that, owing to the absence of her husband and Lieutenant Burton, she could not obtain the woman's address, and so must trouble me. She seemed worried and anxious, I thought; the writing was unequal and the tone of the note perturbed.

As I sat with it in my hand, two plantation superstitions shaped themselves in my memory.

"Ef you ever dream o' snakes, an' dey's comin' to'ards yer, dat's de sign somebody's got er grudge agin yer, an' gwi' wu'k it out," our Mammy had been wont to declare, and whenever we children would dream of a serpent and evil would thereafter befall us, the two events would immediately assume the relation of prophecy and fulfillment. With the other superstition we had been indoctrinated by Dandridge, the old carriage-driver—"Ef ever yo *flesh crawl* when yer meet anybody fus' time, dat pusson gwi tarrify yer een-er-mos' ter de'f every time yer cross tracks wid 'em. Dat ar sign don't *nuver* fail." And, foolish as it may sound—as it *must* sound—the jargon of these old negroes increased my reluctance to execute my friend's commission because I had dreamed of serpents advancing toward me many times since my meeting with Madame Silva, and my flesh, while it retained its position on my bones, was subject to decidedly unpleasant thrills whenever I came in contact with her.

After indulging in a little dismal prognostication, I had the sense to become ashamed of myself and disgusted at my cowardice. As a corrective, I sternly perused twelve double-column pages of

an abstruse treatise on psychical and physical relations (not one word in twenty of which could I understand), examined my tongue, felt my pulse, and bolstered up my inner woman with Vitalized Phosphites; after which I put on my bonnet, and, with the feeling that I had burned my bridges, betook myself to the house of Madame Silva.

The house was unpretentious and on a quiet street, and I will admit that my heart beat a shade more rapidly as I ascended the steps and rang the bell. To my infinite relief, the servant informed me that Madame Silva was out and that the time of her return was uncertain. Then I asked for the other lady, being minded to be quit of my trust, and was told that she was engaged, but would probably see me in a few moments. As soon as all danger of an interview with my *bête-noir* had been removed, my curiosity asserted itself and I signified my willingness to wait. The man evidently mistook me for a patient, for he glanced uncertainly at a door opposite the stairway, hesitated, and finally ushered me to a room on the second floor.

It was a long room, gorgeously furnished in subdued yet glowing colors, with gleams of dull gold here and there, and deep-toned, harmonious Eastern suggestions in the hangings, rugs, and divans. Along two sides of the room were low book-cases filled with books—rare old editions, illuminated missals, volumes of black-letter of great antiquity and priceless value. On the other sides were cabinets and tables of sandal-wood and teak-wood loaded with *curios* of exquisite beauty, and the top of the book-cases and shelves above the mantel held a superb collection of jades, porcelains, and silver and ivory carvings.

As an initial step in "mind-cure" nothing could have been better than that room, for there was in it everything to warm and stimulate the imagination, and at the same time calm and distract it from

itself. Interests, associations, aroused by surrounding objects, sprang to life within the brain; involuntarily thought busied itself with extraneous matters and was refreshed, as by mountain air at day-dawn. Even the atmosphere of the place, tintured with some faint foreign perfume, fragrant and pungent as spice-wood, invigorated and restored tone to the system like a powerful tonic.

I found myself thinking less disrespectfully of the "healers" as I wandered about their beautiful room, pausing now before the ebony pedestal, on which dreamed the sacred bird of Egypt, and again beside a rough iron crucifix, rudely wrought and crusted with the rust of ages. Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva—the tri-personal god of India—had a table of sandal-wood and a corner all to themselves (or himself), Brahma lifted a little above the other two, solemnly regarding the four quarters of the Universe with his eight onyx eyes and holding the emblem of power and immortality in his four hands. Nor was Buddha wanting, idealized in ivory, grand, unapproachable, super-human in his expression of deathless tranquility, gazing out into space with eyes which could see the duty afar, but not that near at hand. I turned from the god-like man in ivory to the man-like god in iron, remembering that the one for the good of humanity forsook his wife and unborn child and the duties and cares of his household, while the other in the supreme moment of mortality had thought not only for the world and they that dwell therein, but for the mother and the brethren sorrowing near.

My examination brought me at length to the mantel, which was of dark wood highly polished; in the centre of the space, reaching nearly to the ceiling, a deep, cool mirror gave the beautiful room in lengthened vista, and the shelves on either side of it showed exquisite soft-hued jades, opaque and semi-transparent, creamy, milk-white, tinted like sea-

shells, or with spots of vivid green. Below the mantel were other shelves containing bronzes, whose dusky brown toned into the terra-cotta shades of the tiles. A rush of warm air from a half-concealed register informed me that the room was not dependent for warmth on the half-smoldering sticks in the fire-place. My feet were chilled, and I seated myself on a divan and extended them to the register, leaning forward at the same time to inspect two marvelous little bronze devils with golden eyes and bracelets and anklets of the same metal inlaid curiously and forks of gold to their scaly tails. They embraced a shield of bronze with a wedge-shaped slit in the centre, and the whole composed an ancient sword-guard. Presently my attention was arrested by the murmur of voices coming from the lower floor, the register acting as a speaking-tube. Two persons appeared to be speaking simultaneously; the tones were excited but the words were indistinguishable, so I did not trouble myself to move. In a moment, however, a sentence or two materialized from the general murmur and came to me distinctly.

"Then you refuse?"

The voice was that of a man, and sounded rough and bitter.

"Most certainly," a woman's voice replied. "The past is dead, buried—well-nigh forgotten. She has grown beyond it, above it. You are nothing to her—never can be anything to her again. This is the truth, and, hard as it may seem, it is better that you should know it."

"And the child?"

"That, too, is of the past. Of what value is an atom more than the aggregate of humanity? To the true neophyte humanity ceases to unify, the microcosm becomes nothing. In the higher stages of development humanity itself becomes nothing; the soul is uplifted above terrestrial things; it inhabits realms from whose sublime shores the petty happenings

of life recede as recedes the wave when its power has been spent."

"Your simile is inapt," was the cold response. "The wave recedes but to return, often with added power and a longer sweep inland. While we live the life of the body we must conform to the conditions of the body and be subject to its limitations. It is the law, and there's no evading it. The balderdash you've been talking isn't worth the breath you've expended in it. Once more, will you help me to an interview with Silvia?"

"No."

"I'm speaking in my right!"

A low laugh with a mocking inflection, some inaudible words, and then:

"To what end would you see her? Her choice is made—was made two years ago. We have told you—you know of your own research—that the magnetic power is increased or diminished in proportion not only to purity and chastity of thought and life, but in proportion to the spiritualization of the medium. The higher development can only be reached by the subordination of all things material. Silvia's feet are in the path: already the goal is well-nigh in sight, already is she lifted above the things of life; soon will she be able to kindle the astral fire with her hands; soon will she be sublimated, freed forever from the petty limitations of time and space. This she knows, and think you that for mere carnal affection, mere human love, she will forego this glorious consummation of hope and endeavor?"

The woman's tone was that of an enthusiast working herself into an ecstasy. There was a momentary pause, and then the man said:

"On some points I'm at a loss to determine which is the madder woman—Silvia or you. Of one thing I'm certain, however, *you* are more generally responsible. For that reason I've come to you and stated the human side of the case. You will observe I don't say *my*

side; all that, as you say, is over. Still, according to my way of thinking, I owe this woman duty and protection, if she will take them. You say she will not. I decline to take your word for it. You refuse to sanction an interview. I shall obtain an interview without your sanction and put the case fairly before her once again. Two years may have worked some change. Once more she shall have the chance to choose between you and me."

"The choice has been made."

"So you say. But it must be reaffirmed unequivocally *now*—for the child's sake."

The sounds ceased, as though the persons had changed their positions, probably moved toward the door.

My interest in the singular conversation had been so absorbing that the fact that I was playing the part of unsolicited audience did not suggest itself until afterward. Then I comforted myself with the reflection that the few sentences I had overheard, while they excited my imagination, conveyed no knowledge of the speakers. Once there had seemed to be a familiar tone, or a resemblance to a familiar tone, in one of the voices, but it was not sufficiently pronounced for identification.

The talk of the woman sounded terribly unreal; it suggested visions as fantastic as those reflected from the infinite on the

half-aroused brain of a sleeper. This striving and clutching after the unattainable, in what could it result save unrest, possibly madness. There was about it a futility that was pathetic, an unconsciousness of the futility and the pathos that was appalling. It was as though one should beat the air with his hands and imagine that the vibrations he caused could move the worlds in space.

After a moment the feeling that some one was entering or about to enter the room changed the current of my thought and caused me to glance upward at the mirror. It held the reflection of a door leading into an inner apartment and covered by heavy portieres of some rich Eastern fabric. As I looked I could see the portieres parted by two dusky hands, and in the opening appear the figure of a Hindoo Ayah, who took a survey of my back and noiselessly withdrew. The proceeding brought all my weird, uncomfortable feelings back in a swarm. I rose and touched the bell, determined on instant departure—or perhaps the word "flight" would be more appropriate.

The servant who answered the bell was the man who had let me in, and to him I intrusted Mrs. Chalmers's note, on which I had written the word "immediate" in pencil.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]





A GLIMPSE OF CITY LIFE.

WAL, Mrs. Green, I've come over to tell you somethin' 'bout city life—real high-flown city life, sech as we've never sot our eyes on 'fore.

You know my half-sister, Matildy, marr'd a speculator an' moved to the city. Wal, jest 'fore Christmas, Simon he says, "Why don't you women-folks put in Christmas at Matildy's? She'd be powerful glad to see you after fifteen long years. 'Twould be a fust-rate s'prise if you'd come down 'pon 'er all unbeknown, jest when they're fixed fur Christmas."

"Brother," says I, "how d'you ever think o' it?"

"It come to me like an inspiration," says he, pleased.

I own I liked the idee. 'Twasn't like takin' the hull family an' goin' none knowed whar.

"Hev we got clo'es fit?" asked Jane, kinder falt'rin'.

"Jane Wiggins," says I, "we've got our stiff green silks as will stan' 'lone to wear when we go out visitin' Matildy's frien's, an' there's our good beaver cloaks and quilted silk hoods bordered wi' fur, an' our muffs, an' what else d'you want? I'm sure we'll make quite a genteel 'pearance."

When we war all ready there war six o' us, after all. We couldn't leave the baby an' the twins, an' Jane said 'twould be sich a treat for Henrietta an' wouldn't be no bother, so the gal was in mighty high speerits 'bout visitin' 'er city cousins.

'Twasn't more'n a day an' night's ride to Matildy's, an' I said goin' 'long that come to get started, 'twas a burnin' shame we hadn't visited our sister's folks sooner.

An' 'twas a real s'prise to 'em. Matildy, who don't look strong, as I s'posed she would a doin' nothin', got that narvous

that I thought she was goin' to faint. I tol' 'er 'twasn't no use feelin' oneasy, seein' 'twas all in the family an' 'er big home was fixed up in finest company trim. To make 'er feel easier I 'gin bustlin' 'roun' an' makin' myself to home, an' I tol' Jane to do the same.

Law me, Mrs. Green, what a home twas, an' she nor the gals don't turn their han' over at work. Thar war sarvints an' sarvints a-pryin' roun' wi' curious eyes in ev'ry corner. It made me feel like a thief to hev 'em lookin' at me so close. An' if thar wasn't that shinin' nigger we seen in that big hotel last summer! He war jest as black as ever and dressed jest the same. I said "How do" to him, spite o' his mean doin's, but he didn't know me. It made me feel kind o' good, though, to see somebody I'd seen 'fore whar thar war so many I didn't know.

The fust night we war thar, Matildy had comp'ny. We didn't know nothin' 'bout it, but war sent to our bed-rooms purty soon after dark. I s'pose Matildy 'lowed we'd be tired out, an' so we war.

We hadn't done lookin' 'roun' at our rooms an' wond'rin' in what direction o' the house we war, when we heerd a louder rattlin' on the street.

"It's a fire!" screamed Jane, ketchin' on to the baby a-layin' sleepin'.

Like light'nin' 'fore me went all the fire stories I'd ever heerd tell o', and the next minute we war all six hurryin' down stairs, but which stairs 'twas hard tellin'.

Some o' the sarvints popped out their black heads to see what was the matter. They tol' us thar wasn't any fire at all, but a party missus was havin', and they grinned 'til we couldn't see nothin' but the whites o' their eyes an' teeth. So we

scrambled back an' put the cryin' chil'ren back to bed.

Jane an' I thought jest the same 'bout this.

Matildy s'posed we war too tired to come down, so she didn't say nothin' 'bout comp'ny; or p'raps 'twas a s'prise. Jane says she warn't too tired, an' wanted to get acquainted wi' Matildy's frien's right 'way, so we put ursel's in comp'ny trim an' went down.

The music 'gun playin' then, an' 'twas well it did, for else we'd never foun' the right rooms.

Fin'ly we opened the door that showed us the comp'ny. For a minute my eyes war that dazzled that I couldn't see nothin'. But when they got used to that strong light, law me, Mrs. Green, what a sight met our eyes. The room was full o' half-dressed women, an' long wi' them war the men! I never was so taken back in my life, an' Jane's face was as red as a pi'ny.

Jest then I ketched sight o' Matildy, an' she war half-dressed too, a-talkin' to a man. (I wouldn't tell you this, Mrs. Green, if 'twarn't you're 'er third cousin, an' wouldn't make a scandal out o' it.)

"Matildy! Matildy Harper!" says I loud as I could, for 'twas gettin' embarrassin' standin' thar wi' so many lookin' at us. "Bless me, Matildy," says I, as she was comin' up wi' 'er long dress a sweepin' the floor, an' 'er bare arms and breast as made me shiver an' raised the goose-flesh; "you'll ketch your death o' col', an' sure you're respect'ble folks an' not crazy? Tildy, Tildy, you're might'ly changed! What'd our ol' father say if he'd lived to see you like that?" an' then I couldn't help it, but I broke down a cryin'.

"That's how you've lost your purty rosy cheeks," says I, soon's I could. "You who war the healthiest an' purtiest gal in the hull country, an' now you look more like a corpse 'fore you're thirty-three.

An' this is high-life, is it?" says I, lookin' roun', an' I was ready to bile over when I saw a slim an' slick-lookin' chap eyein' me over through one eye-glass. Somehow I felt like scornin' him.

Matildy didn't hev much to say. She looked kind o' skeered an' I seen her nether lip was a-tremblin'. So says I to Jane, "p'raps we'd better go back."

Jest then a gran' lookin' man that'd been standin' near us says, "Mrs. Harper, I wish to make the 'quaintance o' these ladies."

Would you b'lieve it, that clever ol' man made me as easy as I feel wi' Simon, an' purty soon we war in a qui't corner for a comfort'ble chat.

He ast me questi'ns in a clever way, not impeden', an' then he listened as to make me feel much knowin'er than I ever did. That man, Matildy tol' me he b'longs to Congress, an' you know them's that makes the laws. Wal, he said things as sot me to thinkin' ever since.

Says he, "You don' like the dresses here?"

I give 'im my 'pinion on that p'int.

"You're right," says he, "it's onnat'ral, but it's custom. It's s'prisin' how we go by the sayin's an' doin's o' others. You make your caps an' dresses like your neighbors, an' you give quiltin's an' tea parties 'cause the rest do, an' so 'tis all over the world."

Says I, "D'you make laws jest like the rest?"

He laughed an' said, "Not allus."

"Then," says I, "why don't you make a law forbiddin' women doin' what's onnat'ral and not respect'ble?"

"That's 'nother queerness," says he; "'fore we get to doin' like others, we want them to do as we see it."

I own I was no match for 'im, but as we talked on, it 'peared so many thoughts come to me as I'd never had 'fore, an' it seemed my herizen took in a bigger part o' the world.

After we'd talked a good spell, says he, "Will you take some 'freshments?"

"Got any peppermint in 'em?" ast I, prompt. "'Cause if they hev I don't want none," an' then I tol' him how I got sick eatin' peppermint drops when I was a gal at a corn-huskin', at your place. You min' the time, Mrs. Green.

Jest then Jane come up, sayin' she'd hev to go up an' see how the chil'ren war, an' war I ready to go yet. I said I war, an' shook han's wi' my frien', forgettin' all 'bout the 'freshments. I war sorry too, fur I might've brung 'em home to the chil'ren.

Jane was bent on startin' fur home the next mornin'. It seemed she hadn't joyed the evenin'.

"Why, Jane Wiggins," says I, "what've you come sich a distance for, an' what'll Matildy say?"

But she was cryin' her eyes red, sayin' she must see Simon an' the boys.

I didn't say much more, thinkin' 'twould look differin' by day-light. But she sobbed in 'er sleep fur Simon an' the boys, an' looked so home-sick in the mornin' that I said I'd go.

Matildy was 'bout sick. She didn't say much agin our goin', but when I took 'er in my arms an' kissed 'er good-bye, she jest laid her head on my shoulder an' cried like a narvous child. An' I made 'er promise to make us a long visit next summer.

Next time I go off, I'm goin' alone. I'm gettin' kind o' fon' o' seein' the world. An' I've been thinkin' how we jidge o' folks. I allus thought Jane the plucky one an' didn't know what Simon'd done wi'out 'er. But she war that limp and back'ards at Matildy's that I don't know what she'd do wi'out Simon. 'Spect they war meant fur each other. An' I feel powerful glad to know we've got one sensible man in the gov'ment.

MAY ENGSTROM.

AN UNREDEEMED PLEDGE.

CHAPTER I.

"HUMPH! truth of effect fair, a little cheap in motive," said the dealer, stroking his mustache as he gazed critically at the picture.

The girl at his side raised her head proudly, and he turned slowly to meet her indignant eyes.

"You see, madam," he said, averting his gaze immediately, "these things are rather in the chromo style, and fat babies are somewhat at a discount just now—advance of civilization, popular education, you know—true art, they tell me" (this deprecatingly), "has to do with decay and death. We really have no demand for those robust compositions; something slighter in texture, more ethereal in tone, more, in short, *cadavereux*, would suit us better. Still, if you care to leave the

picture with us, we can see what can be done with it."

"Thank you, it does not matter," the girl said, hurriedly taking up the canvas, as she did so glancing sorrowfully at the face which smiled at her from it; nothing betrayed her agitation except a slight tremor in her hands, and the dealer looked admiringly at them. They were small and delicately gloved, evidently the hands of a lady. He changed his tone immediately.

"Perhaps we could arrange something for you, madam; there are good points in the study, there is much truth of value in that side light for instance, but the emotional tendency of the whole is—h'm—ah—a little too cheerful. The dimple there is too obtrusively merry, the smile too broad, the eyes too—"

He stopped astonished; the girl had not waited for him to complete his sentence, but had walked out at the door, leaving her critic staring blankly at the marks left by her wet boots on the floor.

They were pretty little feet, he could see, and the peculiar print of the sole reminded him of the way in which his daughter who died young had walked, always with the toes turned a little in. The girl was about her age too, not more than eighteen—he might have taken her picture!

He felt weakly uncomfortable; the tall, slight figure in the gray waterproof, in spite of its proud carriage, had looked strangely pathetic, and he was haunted by a glimpse he had caught of two sorrowful eyes—eyes like those of his daughter in their sweet wistfulness. He started a moment after when he seemed to meet those identical eyes gazing at him from a picture on the opposite wall, and he crossed the shop and bent over the canvas to examine it more carefully. It was a *Madonna and Child* by Agostino Carracci, one he had purchased at Christie's a few days before, and which had up to this time afforded him the gratification it is given to man to enjoy when he has done a good stroke of business. Now, however, it increased his sense of discomfort; he saw on the Virgin's countenance the same expression as that which had rested on the girl's face when she looked down at her picture: the Child, too, bore some resemblance to the baby which had called forth his criticism, though its expression of weakness had not appeared in the sturdy life he had condemned.

The dealer was a shrewd man of business, his æsthetic tastes carefully developed according to the latest canons of modern art; he could at a glance discriminate between a Giorgione and a Correggio, but his acumen failed him when it became a question of the informing spirit of a picture or the reforming spirit of Bond Street. Poetry of concep-

tion he subordinated to adherence to fashionable rule, and his artistic ideals were at ebb or flow according to the position of the luminary which at the moment ruled in the æsthetic firmament. He knew when to take occasion by the hand, yet, in spite of a firm belief in his business faculty, he had an unpleasant conviction that in this case he had been as blind as the sightless Joseph in the picture before him, not to have purchased the work just offered to him. It was no pecuniary loss to himself that he regretted, but the missing of an opportunity of securing a customer in the lady who had just left him. She was a lady, he was convinced; every detail of dress, accent, and manner testified to her refinement, and it had not appeared that necessity had driven her to sell her work;—and she was like *Mattie*! He went to the door and looked up the street to see if she was still in sight; a steady rain was falling, driving passengers to the shelter of cabs and omnibuses, but the pavements were by no means deserted, and it was impossible to distinguish any particular figure in the procession of umbrellas passing along, and the dealer returned, feeling chilly as well as uneasy, to meet the haunting eyes of the *Madonna* again.

Meanwhile *Madeline Vivien*, her canvas under her cloak, was walking rapidly through the rain; all the pride had gone from her manner, and there was nothing but despair on the white face she turned to the gray skies. She was tired and hungry as well as despairing, for all the morning she had been walking from place to place in vain effort to sell the picture upon which she depended for the next month's means of subsistence.

Her feet almost refused to bear her, but she trudged on bravely, for the few coins still remaining would be needed to buy food for the baby at home, and riding, even in an omnibus, had become too expensive a luxury. When she at last climbed the stairs of the attic she called

home, the August evening had begun to close in: wet and weary as she was, a smile broke over her face as she heard the coo of a baby's voice, and she opened the door and met her boy with the sunny face he had been accustomed to see.

Laying down canvas and hat and cloak, she took him up rosy and laughing in her arms, and forgot her weariness in the divine solace of motherhood. If the dealer had been there he would have needed no artistic insight to enable him to identify the original of the picture he had criticised so severely.

He would have seen also that mother and child were strikingly alike; divested of hat and veil, the girl appeared almost too young to be a mother, yet no one could question the relationship existing between the occupants of the attic. There were the same thickly veiled eyes, the same laughing red mouth, the same merry dimple in each, and none but a mother could have talked the tender nonsense which Madeline was repeating to the child.

She put him down by and by and began to light a fire, a homely task out of keeping with the delicacy of her appearance. The room was full of sharp contrasts. Rembrandtesque shadows throwing into high relief the refinement of its occupants: the child's dress was of the costliest, trimmed with dainty lace; the mother's, equally costly though rather worn, spoke of wealth and position, yet the room was almost bare of furniture, and the baby had been lying on a folded rug on the floor—the only bed visible.

There were few articles about; a stool did duty for a chair, and everything would have spoken of sordid poverty had it not been for a handsome easel standing beside the window. The disorder of tubes and brushes showed that it had been recently used, but there were no unfinished pictures, no draperies or artistic *bris-à-brac* to show that its owner was an artist by profession; there was no plat-

form for a model, no *marqueterie* or porcelain for still life, nothing which might supply *motif* to Madeline, nothing but the baby cooing on the floor; he was model and subject and *motif* in one.

When she had coaxed the struggling coal into a blaze she placed the canvas on the easel, where it could best catch the fading light; then she fed her boy and contentedly finished the bread and milk remaining from his meal. There was something very touching in this girl's cheerfulness under such circumstances, a happy capability of being contented under conditions which few women could have tolerated, which might have moved a spectator to tears at its pathos.

Madeline saw nothing pathetic in it; everything seemed supportable—poverty and hunger and discomfort—so long as she could kiss those little red lips and hear the baby prattle of her boy. Yet when she had undressed and laid him down again on the rug, and only his low breathing disturbed the silence in the room, she wrung her hands and her eyes grew wild and frightened. What was she to do if her one means of earning money failed her? They could not live long on the few shillings she had in her purse,—then—

Madeline shuddered, and whispered the word—starvation.

She looked round the room; there was nothing that could be converted into money besides the canvas and her cloak; what furniture there was belonged to the woman from whom the room was rented, and who took charge of the baby during her absence.

She had no jewels with her, nothing except her wedding-ring; her eyes grew hard and stern as she looked at it; it had brought her little but suffering, but her need would be great before she parted with it.

What was she to do? The question pressed itself upon her. It had never obtruded itself so persistently as to-night; with girlish *insouciance* she had borne the

revelation of her husband's faithlessness; with womanly hurt she had escaped from the fetters he had himself broken, and she had borne with motherly love the indignity of her position for the sake of her child; he, at least, should have no reason to associate evil with the name of the father he would never know.

Now and then, in the first few weeks of separation from her husband, Madeline had thought of the future, but the prospect had been seen through the medium of her optimism and inexperience, and it had not alarmed her. She was so gay and sunny it was impossible for shadow to rest long upon her, and when her money came to an end it would be easy enough to earn more by selling her paintings. Madeline was rather proud of the forethought which had induced her to include her painting materials among the few things she had brought from home on the evening of her sudden flight—and then she had baby with her, and she could not be unhappy where he was.

They had not managed badly at first, the two. With a joyous sense of danger escaped, the young mother had taken her child to a respectable lodging-house, where she had remained until rapidly decreasing funds had warned her that she must reduce her expenditure.

Since that time, in spite of economy, to which Madeline had been wholly unaccustomed, she had been obliged to fall back upon her own efforts in order to support herself and the boy.

Knowledge of human nature came to her in a painful guise, and she learned, too late to spare herself suffering, the difference between assured position and uncertain mediocrity. The work which had been applauded in the elegant studio with its costly fittings seemed almost unworthy of notice away from its sumptuous surroundings, and in the alien *entourage* of the dealers' shops it grew positively feeble and pretentious. It was not without merit, nevertheless; Madeline could catch the

splendor of a sunset, and bring the breadth and slope of breezy downs so close that in presence of her landscapes one held his breath and felt the shadows of mountain masses of clouds sweeping over him; the winds grew heavy with the scent of heather and gorse when she pictured stretching moorlands, and the roar of breakers could clearly be heard when her subject was yellow sand or flashing waves. Perhaps her art was simply the trick of nature; certain it is that away from the sea and beyond sight of the moorland it failed her; she could not create by force of imagination.

The few sketches she had brought with her had been sold after much difficulty, and then Madeline had seated herself to paint for her living. She looked round the attic at its bare, whitewashed walls, and then through the window at the long vista of chimney-pots, then back again to the room in which was nothing beautiful, nothing except herself and the child, and she pressed her hand to her forehead despairingly. Where could she find a subject?

The boy had answered her unspoken question by creeping to her feet and pulling at her gown; she had kissed him joyfully, and had set him on the floor and begun to paint. At the end of the sitting she had blocked in his figure, and in a few days the baby was smiling on the canvas, rosy and beautiful.

It was hard to part with the picture she had painted with such pride and joy, but it was necessary, and so Madeline had started out that morning to seek a purchaser. She went from shop to shop, half relieved, yet disappointed, to meet with refusals only, and it was as a last attempt that she had gone into the shop in Regent Street where we first saw her. Now every effort had failed, and she was asking herself what she was to do. She drew out her purse and counted the money it contained, and her heart sank, for there were only three shillings, and on Saturday

the month's rent was due! If the picture was not sold before Saturday she would be penniless.

Madeline was an orphan and friendless. She grew cold as she realized that she must help herself or perish with her child.

One other alternative was before her: she might return to her husband and give up the terrible struggle with fate; but her woman's pride refused to consent to such a course, and she rose and bent over the sleeping child. He stirred in his sleep and she soothed him softly, then she stood up brave and strong to face the future: for the sake of her boy she must never return to her husband.

CHAPTER II.

Two months later, and Madeline Vivien sat with haggard face nursing her dying child. Could the pinched face, the little, shrunken limbs, the white lips, belong to the baby who had laughed merrily on the floor only eight weeks ago? The mother's heart rose up in bitter denial; it was not her child, but the offspring of despair and want lying on her knee. She held the thin little frame passionately to her as she glanced round the room. Was there nothing left?—nothing by the sale of which the baby's life might be prolonged a few hours longer? She did not mind starvation for herself, but it was hard to see him die, and to be powerless to give him the food that would save him.

These weeks had been a grim struggle with destiny; failing to get employment of any kind, Madeline had been obliged to sell her few possessions, and one by one they had gone, until she had disposed of everything for which she could find a purchaser; the boy's clothes had been replaced by coarser garments, her own were as scant as might be; easel and box had gone; a few old tubes and brushes on a cracked plate, and a canvas which had been used to replace a broken pane in the

window, were all the relics of art remaining. The picture, still unsold, had found its way to the pawnshop, whither had preceded it everything for which no buyer could be found; they had reached the last stage of want now, and as the woman looked round the room she saw that there was nothing in it which could be converted into money. Yet the boy was dying before her eyes, perishing for want of that which was so plentiful in his father's house, which she might have procured for the asking, which was still ready to her hand would she but seek for it.

Could she stoop to such a humiliation—to ask bread from the man whose faithlessness had driven her to this extremity? The woman's pride said No, but the mother's love cried Yes!

In quick resolution Madeline rose up; not a moment was to be lost; she would return to her husband's home before the child died.

Her sudden movement wakened the baby, and he opened his eyes and stretched out his hand to his mother, seizing one of her fingers with a little cry. The poor woman burst into tears, and would have drawn her finger from the clinging baby-clasp, for it was the third finger of the left hand, and the ring was no longer there. If she returned to her husband, it would be without the sign which marked the difference between her and the nominal mistress of the house.

She sat down again and rocked herself to and fro in her misery; she could not return like that; the one door of escape was closed to her; she must remain and die with her child.

Like a creature at bay, she looked wildly round her again; she might have missed something; surely some one thing remained which might buy food for the child.

There was nothing to be seen but the old tubes and the dirty canvas; there was nothing to be heard but the steady drip, drip, of rain on the tiles outside. All at

once the sound became associated with the words she had heard during a shower some weeks before, "*True art has to do with decay and death.*" Madeline smiled with a woman's bitterness as she said the words aloud. She had lost her girlishness, and looked, despite her nineteen years, as aged and careworn as a woman of forty; all the gracious roundness of face and figure had disappeared, she was gaunt and thin, and her face wore the hunted expression of one who is dying of hunger.

"True art? Surely I know it now," she said, harshly, glancing from her bony fingers to the quiet little form on her knee. As she gazed her breath came thick and fast, and a red flush rose to her forehead as she glanced at the window; for a moment she hesitated, then—

"O my baby! O my darling! forgive me! I must do it to save you," she cried; but she shuddered as she laid the child down and stepped to the window, from which she took the old canvas.

The air, getting cool now, for it was early October, seemed to chill her to the bone, but she closed her lips firmly and examined the tubes on the plate without faltering.

It was not yet nine o'clock, and she set to work busily; in a little while the walls of the attic began to appear upon the canvas; they were roughly sketched in, and spoke eloquently of the poverty of the place. The fireless grate, the bare floor, the rough table, were put in one by one, and then with a strange sorrow in her eyes Madeline turned to the baby. He was lying upon an old shawl fast asleep, the blue-veined lids fallen over the eyes, the white, sunken cheek, the colorless lips, seeming to belong to the dead rather than to the living. One thin baby arm was visible; it lay upon the boards, the forefinger of the hand pointing stiffly toward the door.

Madeline's eyes grew dark with tears, and she bent over the child and kissed him softly before she resumed her work;

then, the same determined resolution upon her face, she began to model the little limbs. Once she paused, and covered her face with her hands, determined not to continue, but the weakness was only momentary. "True art has to do with decay and death," she repeated, adding bitterly, "and if this be so, life itself is truest art."

Once again she took up her brush and proceeded with her work. She painted rapidly and well, without knowing the beauty of line and composition growing under her hand, attaining without conscious effort a truth of effect as admirable as it was difficult of achievement.

The morning went on, and she was still at her task; she stopped and looked at the baby anxiously; would he stir before she had completed it? No, he was sleeping quietly still, not even a curl of hair moved by the wind, which, coming through the broken pane, was making her fingers stiff and cold. It was all the better that he still slept; she could not bear to hear his feeble wail when he was awake and cried for the food she could not give him:

"And more and more smiled Isobel
To see the baby sleep so well."

The lines recurred to her with a kind of shock, and, fearing she knew not what, she went and looked down at the baby; then she smiled at her own foolishness as she heard the low breathing of the little one, and returned to her work with new courage to complete it. She painted in feverish excitement, lines from other poems repeating themselves under every train of thought.

"Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none."

"Yet who would believe," she said, fiercely, "that in this great city, among all its

riches, women and children are daily dying for lack of food?"

"Alas! that bread should be so dear, and flesh and blood so cheap! Who cares? Who among all these millions gives a thought to the starving thousands that perish?"

"Even God's providence
Seeming estranged."

Her thoughts answered her. "What have I done that I should suffer so?" she moaned. "How could I remain to see another taking my place in my husband's house? Surely it was no crime to save my child. Could I bear to see him growing like his father? It is hard, O God! it is hard! but the sin—if it was sin—is mine; punish me if Thou wilt, but save my baby!"

Little light came into the attic at the best of times, but the daylight was fading already; Madeline had no time to spare for her thoughts, she must hasten on. She closed her lips determinedly and worked on, the picture growing beneath her touch with inconceivable rapidity. It was only a sketch, but she grew dimly conscious that every stroke of the brush was telling; if she could get the whole effect in that one sitting, there would be no need to alter the picture by the smallest detail. "I will not even glaze it," she resolved.

By this time the artist's enthusiasm had begun to render the feelings of the mother less vividly sensitive, and Madeline had forgotten the lapse of time in the absorption of her work.

The baby still slept quietly, and the picture neared its completion. As the last rays of the sunset touched the window, the woman put down her brushes with a sigh of relief; the sketch, though rough, was practically finished.

Madeline walked slowly back from the table at which she had been sitting to get the full effect of her work. As she gazed at the picture, she grew deadly pale, and staggered against the wall with starting eyes, for the child she saw on the canvas

was not her own living boy but a dead baby! Horror-stricken, she gazed wildly with parted lips at the terrible thing; she had painted her child as though he were dead!

"O God!" she groaned, "I must be mad! What have I done?"

She crossed the room swiftly and knelt down beside the baby, and pressed her lips on the little child's forehead.

Then a great cry rang through the room, and she fell forward senseless, for the baby was dead.

CHAPTER III.

"H'M! ah, well, yes, I must say the emotional tendency is very fine; some grasp on reality in that picture. Pardon me, madam, but I must congratulate you on a distinct advance upon your last work."

The dealer held the picture out at arm's length and gazed at it, his lips pursed up, his head at the correct critical angle from his shoulder.

"A distinct advance, I assure you; that foreshortening is admirable, the line of death on the cheek is—life-like, I may say; the open lips, mouth scarcely fallen as though death had only recently taken place, are really a triumph of effect, and the gray shadow—"

It was too much; only a stern necessity prevented Madeline from snatching the canvas from the man and rushing out of the shop. As it was, she clenched her hands tightly, and reminded herself that she needed the money to pay for the child's funeral, before she interrupted the man, whose every word pierced her heart like a dagger.

"Are you willing to purchase the picture?"

"I shall do so eventually, but I am not prepared to name a price just now. I might sell it on commission."

Madeline clasped her hands nervously.

"I am in immediate need, otherwise I

would not sell the picture at all. It would oblige me."

"Certainly, I quite understand; if you will be good enough to give me your address, I will let you know my price later in the day."

Madeline flushed, but she steadied her hand and wrote her address on the sheet of paper he pushed toward her. Then, faint from sorrow and want of food, she left the shop and walked feebly back to the attic where the baby was lying.

There was no welcoming baby voice to greet her as she wearily ascended the stairs, and she unlocked the door and entered the room with a terrible consciousness of desolation.

As she looked, white and tearless, at the little waxen face a moment after, she shivered from head to foot; a faint dark line surrounded the mouth, the first sad evidence of change. She started back, shocked and agonized.

"So soon," she moaned. "Not three days dead, and already—"

Then a sharp thought stung her into keener anguish; her baby would soon be taken out of her sight, and she had sold the only picture of him that she possessed. Prudence whispered that it was necessary to provide money for the expenses of the funeral, but Madeline would not listen, and, tired as she was, prepared to return to Regent Street and reclaim her picture. Her fast had not been broken since the baby died, and she staggered as she reached the pavement, but she hurried on wildly, only anxious to arrive at the shop in time to stop the sale of the picture.

Soon after Madeline had left the dealer's shop, a lady and gentleman, attracted by a fine Baroccio in the window, came in.

The dealer was expatiating on the beauties of the painting to the lady, while her companion gazed listlessly around. All at once he started and walked quickly to the other end of the shop, where he paused before Madeline's picture, evidently under the influence of strong excitement.

"This, madam, is a remarkable picture. It is mentioned by Dr. Passavant in his *Kunstreise*. Observe the delicacy of modeling, the purity of tone, not often attained by painters of that school, I am sorry to say. If you had come in half an hour earlier I should have said our modern school could produce nothing like that, but I have just secured a composition which is a really extraordinary work of art. The whole effect seems to be the result of unpremeditated work; there is scarcely any labor in it, yet its emotional beauty is perfect."

He led the way to the picture, bowing low as he waved his hand theatrically toward it, the gesture indicative of his part in the artist's success.

"Dear me, how exquisite!" said the lady, adjusting her *pincenez* gingerly. "Those morbid conceptions are really most striking and suggestive, though, of course, quite too horribly artificial. Are you ready to go, Philip?"

The man addressed turned round, and any one less occupied than his companion would have been alarmed at the livid whiteness of his face.

"What is the price of the picture?" he asked.

"I scarcely think I shall dispose of it just now," the dealer answered, cautiously.

"I will give you four hundred pounds for it."

"It would hang well over the mantelpiece in the dining-room," murmured the lady.

"Well, sir, it is a valuable work, and I am not in a hurry to accept any offer at first; still—"

"Who is the artist?" the gentleman interrupted, fiercely.

The dealer lifted his shoulders to his ears and rubbed his hands softly.

"Very like my old Tabby," the lady was remarking, in allusion to a study of cats on an easel. The man turned round, but the remark not being addressed to him, he answered—

"As you see, it is not signed. I am unacquainted with the artist, but when she calls again I might procure her address for you."

"Do so, if you please," and without a glance at his companion Philip Vivien strode out of the shop.

"Horrible! horrible!" he said to himself. "That is Madeline's child; the likeness is too great to be mistaken; but how is it that she has painted the boy like that?"

"It is actually wicked to imagine such horrors, don't you think so, Philip—that dreadful picture, you know. Babies never die of starvation nowadays, do they? I suppose parochial boards are most energetic and complete now; their expenditure shows that; but really they should put a stop to 'realistic' subjects in art. Art, of course, is the obverse of nature."

Philip turned impatiently from the woman at his side; somehow his sister's weak conversation was more annoying to-day than it had ever been before, and just then he wished to be at liberty to think over the past in which he had driven Madeline from her home.

It was not yet three years since he had brought her to it, a beautiful child-wife, not a year since he had yielded himself to his master passion, and under its influence had said words which had compelled her to leave his roof. The words had been false, provoked by the demon in whose power he had placed himself; but how was Madeline to know that they referred to his *sister*? He had intended to deceive her, and he had succeeded too well; his wife had left him, and until to-day he had not been able to find a clue to her hiding-place.

The man cursed the fatal thirst which had been the cause of all this trouble, mentally vowing that when Madeline returned to him he would never taste spirits again. He was longing to escape from his sister's platitudes and to begin his search for his wife; but it was necessary

to bridle his impatience, for some hours would elapse before the dealer in Regent Street would be able to get the address.

In the meantime, Madeline had returned to the shop; she paused outside to gain breath, and then went in, stifling a strange feeling of suffocation at her heart.

The dealer advanced to meet her, noting each detail of her dress and contrasting it with her appearance on the first occasion on which he had seen her.

Her gown was faded and shabby, her gloves old and torn; her whole air impressed him as that of distress and want.

Poverty is a hard thing; it not only checks physical development, it hinders the growth of our finer feelings. The dealer had suffered some slight discomfort when he had not obliged the lady by the purchase of her picture; but he felt quite comfortable in the presence of the woman's need, and he assured himself contentedly that he would be able to *finesse* to some purpose in the bargain he was about to make.

"I have decided to take your picture, and even to lay down a considerable sum for it. One hundred pounds is a large price for a thing like that; but I am always glad to oblige my employees, especially when—"

He glanced suggestively at Madeline instead of completing his sentence, and the color flamed proudly into her cheek as she met his insolent stare.

One hundred pounds! She had not expected the fourth of that sum; it would keep the wolf from the door for an indefinite time; but it had come too late to save the boy, and she would rather die than part with this sole reminder of him. True, she might redeem her first picture with part of the sum offered for this one; but she did not value that in comparison with this she had painted in the boy's last hours of life. A sob rose in her throat, and she turned hastily away for a moment; then she faced the man again.

"I have decided not to sell the picture. I will take it with me."

The dealer's countenance fell as he saw a vision of large profits fading before his eyes, and he diplomatized.

"As you like, madam; the price I offer is a large one; you will scarcely get a better, I imagine."

"I am not thinking of the price; I do not wish to dispose of the picture."

"Yet it is one which might bring you before the artistic world. Would you have any objection to my exhibiting it while you reconsider your decision?"

"No, no," she cried, nervously, "I shall not change my mind; I must take it with me now."

"I am anxious for your sake that you should not miss this opportunity of attaining celebrity, madam. I will write you a check for two hundred pounds; will that meet your views?"

Madeline's brain was reeling, and she caught at the chair by which she was standing to support herself. She scarcely understood what was being said to her; but she was conscious of a blind effort to escape with the picture to the attic where the little form was slowly but most surely undergoing that awful change. She grudged every moment spent away from its side, and she took up the canvas, saying with a calm dignity which silenced the man—

"You have my decision; it is unalterable."

He watched her as she walked slowly and wearily from the shop; then he turned away, inwardly anathematizing feminine unreason and obstinacy. He had not attempted to induce her to alter her mind, knowing that she would not be moved from her purpose.

Half an hour after, Philip Vivien appeared. His vexation was great when he learned that the picture was not to be sold, and he bit his lip angrily.

"It is not the loss of the picture that annoys me," he explained. "I wished to

discover the artist. Did she leave her address?"

The dealer hesitated. Was this a ruse to defraud him of his profits? He was about to deny his knowledge of Madeline's address, when all at once he remembered the print of the little feet which had reminded him of his dead child. We are all, the strongest of us—steel-encased as we believe ourselves to be—vulnerable at some one point, and the dealer was no exception to the rule. He would have robbed Madeline of the price of her work without compunction an hour ago; but he could not wrong her now, and he answered:—

"I have it here; the lady wrote it herself."

He handed the sheet of paper to Philip Vivien, and the man trembled violently as he took it, for the first glance had assured him that it was Madeline's beautiful handwriting he saw.

He scarcely paused to see the address; in another moment he had left the shop and was in his carriage, driving rapidly toward his wife and child.

CHAPTER IV.

THERE was no answer to his impatient knock at the attic door, and he repeated it, wondering if he had arrived before Madeline.

It was strange that no one should have been left in charge of the baby. He gazed around him vaguely; the house was in a fairly respectable neighborhood, but not one suited to his wife's position, and the attic to which he had been directed—it was not possible that she lived there, she must have hired the room for a studio.

It was curious that she should have painted the baby in such a poor place and amid such wretched surroundings; strange, above all, that she should have chosen him as her model of a child dead from starvation; it was not like Madeline to take such ghastly subjects.

Suddenly he started. What if this had really happened? What if they had been reduced to such straits that the boy had really died of want? He put the thought away immediately. Madeline would not be reduced to such extremity before returning to him; besides, there was always the parish to fall back upon—that Olympus of man's latter day! Surely she would not let the boy starve when she had only to apply there to have her need supplied; then she knew that her husband's door would not be closed against her; she certainly would have come back to him!

Hard and cruel as he had been to her sometimes, he was always fond and tender in his sober moments; she would have remembered that, and not have remained away had she been destitute.

Then he recollected the threat he had uttered the night on which she had left him, his brutal words, and the misleading,—

“To-morrow another woman will be mistress of this house!”

Was it possible that she had taken the words as, in his fiendish mood, he had meant them to be understood? He had intended to explain them to her afterward, but when he had returned it had been too late—Madeline had fled, and taken her boy with her.

He groaned and leaned against the door for support; it yielded to his weight; he would have fallen had he not caught the post. He stumbled forward, as the door flew open, into the room, where he stood transfixed and staring.

Before him there were the bare boards, the mean furniture, the empty grate, a cracked plate which had recently served as a palette, and a litter of tubes and brushes.

Before him, too, the picture he had seen in the dealer's shop lying on the floor, and another picture besides—a woman lying face downward as she had

fallen, at the side of an old, tattered shawl, and on the shawl?—

A little waxen figure still, with blue-veined lids lying lightly over the sunken eyes in their last calm slumber; one arm thrown across the breast, the other stiff on the floor, the outstretched forefinger pointing—pointing.

Philip Vivien staggered back as though he had been shot; he could not meet the terrible condemnation of that little white finger, and he covered his face with his hands and moved away from it. Then he stooped and called his wife gently.

“Madeline, Madeline, my darling!”

There was no answer. He stooped closer, but he dared not touch her.

“Madeline, I said what was false to you that day; it was my sister who was to take charge of the house—no other woman has crossed the threshold since you left it. I was not myself when I said it, but I will never touch spirits again. I pledge you my word, Madeline, from the day you come back to me I will taste nothing stronger than water.”

Still there was no answer, and he bent forward beseechingly:

“O my darling! can you not forgive me?”

The silence remained unbroken, and as he cast down his eyes he saw that the child's finger on the canvas was pointing directly at him.

He stepped aside hurriedly, then, full of a horrible dread, he raised his wife's hand: it was cold and growing rigid.

Dropping it suddenly, he stood up with a hoarse cry:

“O my God! who has done this?”

He had changed his position, and as he looked down aghast at his dead child and its dead mother, he saw the inexorable little white finger outstretched toward him:

Thou art the man!

Philip Vivien turned and fled.

ANNIE E. HOLDSWORTH.

A WIFE AND A FRIEND:

A STORY IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

Dear is the welcome guest to the Frisian wife
when the vessel strands.
The ship is come, and her husband to his
home, her own provider.
And she welcomes him in, washes his weedy
garment, and clothes him anew:
It is pleasant on shore to him whom his love
awaits. THE SONG OF BEOWULF.

MAX SIMMOND had not come so far, nor been absent from home so long, as Beowulf's seafarer. He has only been spending a long November day toiling round his farm in the mud, but, as he stood on the wooden bridge over the swift, rain-swollen river, he was filled with just the same spirit of home-worship. Always, at the end of every day's work, when he saw that light, there came over him a deep feeling of gladness and reverence. He did not quite understand it, but he enjoyed it. A vague memory rose of the tones of the organ as it had sounded in the little sunlit church when Muriel and he were married. It was as if he had heard Muriel singing through the darkness; or as if she had been able to stretch out her hand through the distance to touch him, as if in the brightness of that light he could see at once all the beauty and hope and content of his home.

Max Simmond was a big, fair-haired, quiet-voiced man, palpably a descendant of the old Saxon settlers, one of the steadfast, patient, home-loving race—only through time and peace and the soft climate of the inland valleys the former

fierceness had died out, and only the strength and sweetness remained, as it remained in the strange, wild air he was whistling, once, perhaps, a fierce war-song, now softened and mellowed till it seemed like a dream of battles and conquests long ago.

Max Simmond had not, perhaps, much individual character. He was neither brilliant nor heroic; his virtues were chiefly negative. He was brave, because it would not have occurred to him, under any circumstances, that there was anything to be afraid of; truthful, half from lack of imagination, half because he could not have realized any motive for lying. He would have been a good husband under any circumstances; but married to Muriel! why, he gave the whole strength of his nature to trying to satisfy her! And she was satisfied, and that, of course, proved her goodness and sweetness, and made him the happiest man in the whole world.

He stopped again at his own gate to remove the cartridges from his gun. Muriel liked him to carry a gun when he went round the farm, not that there was much likelihood of his shooting anything, but she thought the gun looked well. It was a distinct mark of caste, and showed the land he farmed was his own.

Max entered the house by the back door, as he always did in muddy weather, and he took off his boots in the back entry, as became a docile and well-taught husband.

He felt for his slippers in the accustomed place, but, not finding them there, hung up his wet ulster and went forward into the hall.

Through an open door Max could see his graceful, sweet-voiced wife, and he paused again, as he always did, to enjoy a moment of unexpressed thankfulness for her, a sort of mental "Grace before Muriel;" then he saw she was not alone. His own old friend, his one chosen chum, Philip May, who had been abroad nearly two years, was with her.

Max was dashing forward with eager words of welcome, when he remembered that Muriel would certainly be annoyed if he entered the room in his stockings when she had a visitor. At that moment Muriel's voice, musical and reproachful—tender almost—floated out to him:

"How can you blame me, Philip? You had left me in anger. You had said you would never see me again."

"But I took all that back; I begged your forgiveness for what I had said. In the letter I wrote you I implored you to forget it, and to remember only how I loved you, and that you had given me your promise."

"In the letter you wrote me?"

"Yes—the night I sailed. I said all that and more. Max was seeing me off; I gave the letter to him because it would reach you sooner so. Muriel, why do you look like that? Have you nothing to say? Muriel, is it possible that Max did not give you my letter?"

A moment before Max had been about to make his presence known; now he stood waiting, for it was Muriel's right to answer that question.

There was a moment's intense silence; then he heard his friend's voice again—in amazed, half-incredulous doubt:

"Max! dear old Max! Muriel, it can't be so. There's not a true man on the face of the earth if Max is false. Muriel, you would defend him if it were possible. No, don't speak. I see. My one friend

has betrayed me. I would have trusted Max with my life. I did trust him with more than my life when I gave him that letter."

Max listened with a terrible eagerness he would not understand. Of course, Muriel would speak now. She only waited to collect herself. In a moment she would speak, and would clear him from that horrible charge with indignant contempt. Nothing could be more certain than that.

But Philip spoke again—fiercely and passionately this time.

"I understand. It was not your fault. You thought I had given you up in my insane anger, and you let yourself be persuaded to marry him in despair. Muriel, my poor darling, we have been betrayed; but, by Heaven! Max Simmond shall repent it. Liar! Thief! Muriel, you belong to me, and he has stolen you. I will wait till he comes home, and he shall answer for it."

Philip May broke into incoherent threats of vengeance, and Max listened and waited.

Surely, surely, Muriel would speak now, he knew she would. He held his breath and waited.

Yes—her dear, sweet voice sounded distinct and eager:

"Philip, dear friend, for my sake—yes, for my sake—meet him in peace; he is so good, so kind to me."

Max heard no more. He did not care for the answer. What did it matter? What did anything in the world matter after that? His friend might murder him as he had threatened, if he would. His wife had done worse.

He turned from the lighted hall, and, going out again, wandered aimlessly down the dark road, trying to understand what he had heard and seen.

He had heard his friend accuse him of a cruel treachery, and his wife had not denied the charge. She had actually confirmed it by her answer. He had seen her sweet face raised in tender pleading

that he might be forgiven a fault, which she knew the whole forces of the universe could not have moved him to commit.

He knew what the discussion was about. Philip and Muriel had been friends before he had met her. He had often wondered, when first he had seen them together, if they cared for each other; but he had never asked, because he was not given to asking questions, and, besides, he had told himself that, if Philip May ever wanted him to know anything, he told it freely. Then Philip had been obliged to go to Japan on sudden business, and Max had seen him on board the ship. At the last moment Philip had given him a letter for Muriel, and he had taken it to her the same evening. Muriel, with some pretty jest about even girls having business letters sometimes which must be attended to, had read it in his presence, first asking his permission, like the gracious gentlewoman she was. Then she had thrown it on the fire, saying there was nothing in it. At that he had summoned all his courage, and begged her to tell him if there was anything between her and Philip, because he had loved her from the first moment he had seen her, but had kept silence because he did not want to disturb her or Philip in their happiness, and that he should love her till he died, because he could not help it, and would not if he could.

Then she had put her sweet white hands in his, and had told him that she loved only him, and he had asked her if she were sure, and she had laughed a little, and said, "Very sure—she never had loved, never could love, any one but him," and she had laid her dear, graceful head on his breast, and made him promise he would be very good to her, because she could not bear to be scolded. Afterward he had found two or three glistening, wavy hairs on his coat, and had treasured them ever since, in memory of the first time her head had lain on his breast.

It had lain there so often since. She had spoken the like pleading words so

often; not lately, but when first they were married, if things went wrong in the house, or if she had been a little impatient or petulant. Afterward she had ceased to fear scolding, because everything she did satisfied him, everything she said delighted him.

Max found himself on the bridge again, looking at the far-off light. All the joyful content in the completeness of his life seemed so far away in the past that he could scarcely believe in it. The memory of the time when, but a little child, he had wept over the death of his mother, did not seem so lost in the past as the days when he believed in Muriel. He found himself almost in tears as he thought of his mother; but the loss of Muriel was as far off as the memory of half forgotten dreams. But Muriel was waiting for him, he could see her shadow cross and recross the light, yet she was as hopelessly lost to him as if she had lain beneath the rushing waters of the river below him.

He remembered, in one of those books his wife had been in the habit of reading to him, or making him read to her in the evenings, because she wanted to improve his mind and to have her husband as well read as herself—he liked it best when she read, because then he could look at her and see all the strange lights on the waves of her hair, and watch her eyes brighten or her lips tremble in sympathy with the story; sometimes she would let the book fall on her knees and begin to talk about it, and her words were always so much wiser than the prose, so much more poetic than the poetry. Well he remembered one poem about a sea-maiden, who had fallen in love with a youth who was swimming somewhere—he had forgotten the story—but the sea-maiden had flung her arms round the youth and had borne him in love and triumph to her cave, only to find him dead. Max remembered he had asked Muriel not to go on reading, because the idea was too horrible; and yet he had not half understood it then. He understood it now; he knew how it felt to think one's

arms held all love and all happiness, and to find one's self only clasping a dead thing.

The light still shone out, bright and clear. The sight of his roof-tree in flames would have spoken less to him of ruin and desolation, for that light told him that he must go home and tell his wife what he had heard, and then their life would be ended. There could be no hope, no future, after that.

CHAPTER II.

"MAX! Is that you, at last? O my dear old boy! how late you are! And how wet! You bad boy, you had not your ulster. But I can't scold, I am so glad to see you; I have really been quite anxious."

Muriel held up her face for her usual kiss, and he kissed her, because—he said to himself—it was for the last time; but he knew in his heart that he could no more have refused than he could have struck her.

Then she told him that he would find dry clothes by the fire in his room, and he must be very quick, because dinner had been waiting so long, and, besides, there was a pleasant surprise awaiting him.

Then Philip came into the hall. And here was a new trouble—for Philip believed him to be a false friend, a scheming lover, and must always believe so—for he would never defend himself at the cost of Muriel's shame. He felt as bitterly humiliated as if there had been cause for such a belief; he scarcely dared to hold out his hand; he saw all the color leave Philip May's face in the effort of self-control; he saw the contempt in his eyes, and felt him shrink as their hands touched, and Max knew he had lost his friend forever.

Somehow the evening passed. It bewildered Max that the other two bore it so well. How could Philip sit at table with such a one as he believed his host to be. "Philip—dear friend—for my sake,

for my sake." Ah, yes! that made it easy, of course.

So Philip talked about Japan, where he had spent the last two years; about tea-growing and Japanese art. And Muriel listened and laughed and was interested; and all the while it seemed to Max as horrible as jests and laughter and happy careless speech in the presence of death.

At last the evening was over. Max went to the door with his friend, and then came back to the room.

Muriel was kneeling before the fire, holding her hands toward it; the red light shone through them, making the fingers half-transparent. She was singing softly as he entered.

Let him look, let him listen for one moment; let him see her sweet face, fair and untroubled, before he covered it with unutterable shame; let him hear that dear voice sing only once more before he heard it sobbing in vain repentance.

She stopped singing.

"I am glad Philip is gone, Max, though he is your friend and very entertaining. We are happiest by ourselves, are we not, darling? But you look so tired to-night. Are you ill? Have you taken cold?"

He had known it would be so hard to speak. He seemed to have no words, no voice. She was beside him now, her soft hands in his, her head on his shoulder.

"Max, my dear old boy, what is wrong? Your hands are like ice; you must be ill; or are you annoyed about anything? Don't mind it, dear, whatever it is. It is not about Mr. May, is it? Max, you can't be—I mean, you don't think anything foolish about him, do you?"

"I am not jealous, if that is what you were going to say. I could not think anything ill of Philip, and it would go near to break my heart if I fancied he thought ill of me."

Would that make her speak? Would she ask in astonishment what he meant, and tell him indignantly that he had misheard, misunderstood? Heaven grant she might! No, with her face turned from him, but her hands in his, she answered lightly that no one could possibly think ill of her dear, perfect boy.

So beautiful, so winning, so wonderfully sweet and lovable, so dear, so close to him, and yet, when he had spoken, heaven and hell would not be more apart than they would be.

She went on trying like a child to coax him into cheerfulness, telling him he had certainly taken cold; he must go to bed, and she would bring him some hot lemonade, and he might be a little ill for a day or two if he liked—not enough to frighten her, only long enough to see what a nice nurse she would be.

Then at last he could bear it no longer. He drew back from her and tried to speak; he struggled with his voice; he caught his breath like a frightened child; he tried to look at her, but saw only her face as it had been raised in her false pleading to Philip May. Her voice was ringing in his ears, but he did not know if she said: "I love you, Max, only you;" or "Philip, dear friend, for my sake." Then her voice changed to a scream, and servants came into the room, and were helping him up-stairs, while Muriel was crying and calling to some one to go for the doctor and run all the way, for her husband was very ill.

Yes, Max was seriously ill. The strongest man cannot stand motionless for an hour in the rain without suffering for it, even if he be in good spirits at the time. Though, as Victor Hugo tells us, "The happy lover cannot feel the cold, the fire in him defies, dries up the rain," even the happy lover is apt to be the worse for the defying and drying process next day, and Max—his whole being deadened and unnerved—had been thoroughly drenched that night on the bridge; the result was a

sharp attack of pleurisy, troublesome and tedious, but not dangerous.

Illness was as new a sensation as misery to Max Simmond; he had had no experience of either one or the other. To a man ill for the first time it is an awful experience to find that something stronger than himself has seized his body and holds it helpless and passive; to find the limbs obedient yesterday to his will, to-day owning allegiance only to the malady, and, to a man unused to sorrow, the presence of a great grief is bewildering and confounding. It was terrible to Max to find sorrow his master, not to be resisted or evaded or overcome; no more to be thrown off than was the bodily illness; no more to be forgotten than the suffocating pain. For as the pain burned all day, was his last feeling as he slept, the first token of returning consciousness when he awoke, so his new sorrow held on to his heart like a vampire, filled his mind until the last moment before sleep benumbed it, seized it the instant he woke, whispered to him while he dreamed, spoke to him even in the notes of the song Muriel sang half to herself as she went about the room, and stretched its dark hands between them when she stood and smiled at him, when she greeted him in the morning.

Muriel had kept her word. She had shown him how sweet and tender a nurse she could be, cheerful, untiring, and skillful. She made the whole room bright and cozy with her musical voice, her pretty ways, and sweet, cool hands.

Sometimes he lay awake for long hours, wondering what could have been her motive for slandering him. Not love of Philip May, for she had been engaged to him, according to what he had heard. They had quarreled, and Philip had sent her an offer of reconciliation; but she had thrown Philip's letter contemptuously on the fire, saying there was nothing in it. She had chosen to marry him instead.

Why had she denied receiving the letter? Was it because she feared May's re-

proaches? She, who could not bear to be scolded! Then he remembered that Muriel had told him there had never been any engagement between her and Philip. Could it be that she feared lest Philip May, in his anger, might betray the fact that they had been engaged? Great Heaven! Could his wife have traduced him for so slight a cause as that? Why, he would not have believed it—would not have listened to one word against her from the dearest friend he had on earth. No lips, no voice but her own could have raised an instant's doubt of her.

Then, when he turned and saw her sleeping in the chair beside him, her face grown pale and weary with watching, he hated himself for knowing what he knew, and not speaking. He called himself a miserable coward, and said he was wronging his wife by this weak silence. If he had a charge against her, she had a right to know it. (There was some comfort in that thought. If he were wrong, too, that would put them more on an equality. She would not be so utterly ashamed if she had some counter-accusation against him.) Yes, he must speak, in justice to his wife; but not now, while he was so ill, he had no strength now, no self-command—he might break down, and sob like a child—and when he spoke, it must be as a man, as a judge.

Would she ask his forgiveness? he wondered. What must he say to that? It was not a matter for forgiveness; he was not angry with her. If he had found his beautiful wife had some hideous and loathsome disease, he would not have been angry, he would only have pitied her with all his soul, and given his life, were it possible, to make her whole, and that was how he felt now, but the evil was incurable. Not his life—nor hers—could wash out the stain of that lie. And she had been to him as his life and honor; he had thought her as true as the Word of God.

Then her words, "Philip, dear friend,

for my sake," would ring in his ears, and for a moment he would see her face as he had seen it then; but if in his misery he let the slightest sound escape his lips, Muriel would wake and lay her cheek against his, and wonder when he was going to be well again, and say he was her dear, brave boy to lie there so quiet and patient when he was in such pain, and he would answer her carelessly, and turn away, wishing wearily that his illness had been dangerous so that he might have died—and been spared the telling of what he knew.

So the time passed, and Max recovered slowly. At last he could come down-stairs, and see his head workman, and listen to reports of what had taken place during his illness.

Philip May called and congratulated him on his recovery, coldly at first, and then almost as warmly and cordially as in the old days.

Max understood that he had been forgiven, for Muriel's sake, and the thought was unspeakably bitter.

After a few more days Max went about his work again, took up his life just where he had laid it down; worked, over-looked, bought and sold, and planned just as formerly, but found that his trouble had become a part of himself, no more to be cast off than his identity.

Possibly to every third man one meets in the street, such sorrow is an old story; but it was utterly new and strange to Max Simmond.

Sometimes the thought would seize him that there might be some explanation of what he had heard; that Muriel, by some miracle, would sweep away all this misery, and stand before him his true wife once more, and he would kneel at her feet, and implore her pardon, and she would forgive him, for he had loved her so dearly, had suffered so bitterly, and then they would be as perfectly happy as before.

At such times he would hurry home with

eager words on his lips, only to be struck dumb in her presence, and know that even that faint hope was so dear to him that he dare not risk the loss of it.

CHAPTER III.

MURIEL stood one evening at the window lighting the lamps. There had been a long frost, but it had broken now, and the day had been damp and cloudy. Max, coming in from the farm, stood at the door watching her. She had not seen him, and there was a sad, hopeless look on her face, which went to his heart like a child's cry. He remembered, for the first time, that he had seen her look like that when sleeping, or when he had caught her face off guard during his illness.

Was it possible that she suffered? Was her fault a burden and a shame to her? Oh! if that were so, would it not be possible that, between them, they might outlive it? If it were so, he had failed in his duty to her. She had been suffering, and he had held aloof; she had been in trouble, and he had not helped her. For the first time in her presence he felt it possible to speak.

Muriel turned from the lamp and drew down all the blinds but one.

"I don't want the beacon to-night, Muriel," he said, "I am home already."

She turned to him brightly, with her old smile; but somehow Max had liked the sad look better.

"I am so glad you are home early, we can have a cozy talk before dinner. You won't mind dinner being a little late, to-night? Mr. May is coming. We had better leave the beacon for him."

Max hated Philip May's visits. He saw the effort it cost his old friend to sit at the table of a man he believed to have wronged him so deeply, and seemed himself to feel all the pain of the struggle. He knew that he was forgiven—for Muriel's sake—and was as bitterly humiliated by the forgiveness as if he had stood in need

of it. Then he saw that Muriel feared the man to whom she had lied—and that hurt him most of all. It seemed to him, when they were together, that he bore the shame of all three.

He only asked carelessly why May need be late.

"He has been to Oxford, and could not reach Denham station till half-past six o'clock," Muriel said, "but he has promised to ride across the fields, over the wooden bridge, so as not to keep us waiting a moment longer than he can help."

"He can't do that," said Max. "I locked the gate leading off Denham Road to the field-path this morning, when I went through, because the bridge was not safe; the floating ice on the river has all but broken it down. It was all I could do to get over safely, so I locked the gate, lest any one should chance to come through our fields. May will have to come by the road."

"The bridge not safe!" cried Muriel. "O Max! and Philip was so anxious not to keep us waiting, that I let him take my key."

"Then I must go and meet him. The bridge would scarcely bear me this morning; it is not likely to bear him and his horse to-night."

"Don't go out again in such weather; send one of the men."

"They have gone home; besides, I couldn't send the poor fellows out, after a day's work."

"But you are not well enough to go out in the cold."

"Poor old Phil will be drowned if I don't."

By this time he had reached the hall-door, and she had followed him. He turned back to kiss her, and then hurried out.

"Max, I don't want you to go," she called after him; "come back soon to me, darling."

The words followed him down the damp road; he turned for one last look as she

stood in the doorway, and then hurried down the road,

The short cut from Denham main road lay stright through the fields, then along by the side of the river for some hundred yards, then, turning sharply, went over the bridge, and from thence straight toward the light in Muriel's window. Crossing the bridge being out of the question, Max intended, when he reached it, to leave the path and station himself in the field by the river, opposite that part of the path which lay along the further bank; from thence he could shout a warning to his friend.

He hurried across the fields, breathless and anxious, but full of a new hope. Muriel's parting words rang like the refrain of a song in his ears. Muriel's sadness was an augury of hope.

He neared the bridge; but when he was about to turn off into the fields, he saw he was too late, for there was May riding rapidly along the path beside the river; he would turn the corner on to the bridge before Max could stop him. There was no chance of warning him except by the bridge. Max got almost half across it, but the middle part had been entirely carried away since the morning. He held on to a rail and shouted. He was just in time, for he heard Philip's horse splash through the mud at the corner, and he shouted again with all his strength:

"Back! Back, I say, Phil! Don't try to cross. The bridge is broken."

And he threw up his arms to startle the horse, lest Philip should not have time to stop it.

Max saw the horse rear and start back. He saw that Philip had sprung to the ground and was safe. Then the slippery board on which he stood seemed to glide from under his feet. He clutched at the rail, and heard it break. He tried to seize something—anything to save himself, and his hands only held the cold water. Something seemed to strike his head and blind him. "Max, I don't want

you to go. Come back soon to me, darling." The words sounded in his ears through the darkness and blindness and strange, numb pain, so that he did not hear the rushing of the waters as they closed over him.

—
"Max, I don't want you to go. Come back soon to me, darling."

There was an awful stillness in the room, the air was filled with the heavy scent of hothouse flowers, the blinds were drawn, and the cold January sunlight shone dully through them, just touching with pale light the sharp outlines of the long, still figure that lay, covered with a white sheet, on the bed.

"Max, I don't want you to go. Come back soon to me, darling."

The words broke through the silence and darkness and heavy shadows. Did he hear them, or speak them, or were they but a memory? Everything was still and dim, and Max fancied those words the last thought of life, as he sank in the river.

But no, the dark shadows were lifting, and slowly Max began to realize that he was returning to life, not leaving it. He tried to raise his hands that lay crossed on his breast, but could not. He opened his eyes for a second, but found his face was covered. Then he understood what had happened and where he was, and knew that his friends had thought him dead.

He knew this, but only dimly; not with fear or horror, but with dreamy wonder. Presently, of course, some one would come into the room, and he would speak, and they would lift the handkerchief from his face, and take his hands and lift him up from out the darkness and the shadow of death.

He tried to cry out, that he might know if he had strength to make himself heard; but his voice sounded so weak and strange and far off, that he could not tell whether that, too, were not a memory.

Then he heard other sounds, indistinct at first, then more clearly, footsteps, and voices, and the sound of weeping, and he prayed for more strength, because Muriel was weeping for him, and he had no voice to tell her he was alive.

She was speaking.

"Philip, you are not angry with him now?"

And Philip answered: "Heaven forbid, when he lies there in my stead, and when I have found my friend again, who was lost beyond all hope!"

"But he is dead—dead!" she sobbed.

"I can understand this," went on Philip, "this is in keeping. I think he is satisfied with himself now. He wronged you and me, Muriel, and he wronged himself most of all; but he has atoned to all three, now—to me, for he died for me; to you, for he has freed you; and to himself, for he has washed out the one stain on his honor. We all three can say, 'It is well.' Far better that he should lie there than live—fearing to meet my eyes or touch your hand."

"Speak well of him. I want to hear you speak well of him. Say you feel no bitterness against him now."

"I can speak well of him, for I have felt no bitterness against him these many days. You know what I felt and said at first, but afterward, Muriel, did not you, his wife, see? The shame of that treachery was breaking his heart."

Muriel gave a little cry, and Philip went on:

"When I remembered all the years of his true, noble life, and our long friendship, with never a cloud or a doubt, I thought that if his falseness had wounded me, it had killed him, for he could never be the Max Simmond he and I had known any more—and he knew it, too."

Let her speak now; here in the presence of her dead husband let her speak, and say the falsehood was hers, not his; and that she—she only—in her childish vanity,

which could not bear to be blamed, in her miserable, cowardly fear of deserved reproaches, had slandered the noblest husband, the truest friend, that ever lived.

She only sobbed out his name, and broke again into wild weeping; and Philip spoke again:

"But you and I belong to each other, Muriel; nothing can change that. It is no wrong to him, it is part of his atonement, that we should say so here—and now."

"Philip! Philip! Not now—not now."

"Yes, now. Between you and me, who know the story, there must be no deceit; but because no one else must ever know it, no form, no observance respect for his memory requires, shall be forgotten. I will go away for a year; when I return I shall find you waiting for me. No matter how he won you, you have been his wife; be his widow for that time, and, till the end of that time, I will not so much as touch your hand—for his sake."

Let her speak now, and he would answer her. Yes, let her speak while he could answer her. At first, as he had heard Philip's words, the effort had not been to utter, but to hold back that faint cry, the breathing of which would have been life; but now he was falling back into the abyss, the heavy sleep was laying hold on him again, the darkness and clouds were closing round him. Let her speak while he could yet hear; let her speak, if not for truth's sake and for justice, in very pity of the great love he had borne her.

He heard her sobs more and more faintly, he felt his weak hold on life unloosing. Then Philip said:

"Will you leave me alone with him?"

And in the silence and darkness he felt Philip had drawn nearer, and had lifted the covering from his face. The shadows were very close to him now; but Max knew that his old friend had kissed him before he died.

But at the very gates of the other world

Muriel's voice called him back—strong and clear and passionate :

"I have come back to tell you the truth, Philip May. Heaven knows, I have been false enough to you, but never yet to him. I never loved you. When I was engaged to you I did not know what love was ; but when I met Max I knew. When you left me in anger I was glad to be free, for I knew Max loved me. He may have been false to you, but only I can know how true he has been to me, and how forgiving, for I was so afraid he would despise me, or perhaps refuse to marry a woman who had deserted his friend, that I told him I had never been engaged to you ; he forgave that, though he must have known it was a falsehood. When he withheld the letter—"

"But, Muriel, I gave you the letter."

The words came faint, but distinct, from beneath the white covering. With a cry of fearful delight Muriel and Philip sprang forward, and for a few moments all was confusion and amaze. And when help was brought and restoratives applied, and the terrible bruise—made by the falling wood of the bridge—which had caused the long stupor had been found under his hair, he and they began to understand what had happened. He lay there, with Philip May on one side of him, giving him restoratives, and Muriel on the other, with his head on her breast, begging him to wait a little before he asked questions, and only to think how much they both loved him, and how glad they were to have him back again ; and he protested feebly that he must speak now, for this was more than life to him. If she loved him, why did she make Philip think he had not given her the letter ? For he did give it to her.

She told him, soothingly, not to think about it. It was past now, and Philip had forgiven him, and she was glad of what he had done.

Then he begged her, piteously, to make him understand, for he was very tired and confused and could not remember well ;

but, truly, he thought he had given her the letter.

She made a gesture of entreaty to Philip to leave them, while she reminded him ; but Philip refused, and stayed, leaning against the wall.

Muriel bent down till her lips were close to her husband's ear, and said softly : "In the letter Philip May wrote to me, he asked my forgiveness for a quarrel, and begged me to keep my promise to him. In the letter you saw me burn there was nothing but the one word, 'Good-bye.'"

"Great Heaven! Max—Muriel," cried Philip, "we have all been breaking our hearts for a mistake ; and I am to blame. I wrote that 'Good-bye' first ; then, when I got over my anger, I wrote as I said, begging forgiveness. I must have given you the wrong letter, Max, and you did deliver it."

"Ah, yes!" said Muriel ; "and I let you think he had given me no letter, because, when I heard your story, I thought he had forged that which he did give me."

Her voice sounded strange and bitter. She stood apart from them both—her hands clasped tightly together, her face white and ashamed.

Max began, with a painful effort, to tell them what he had heard, and what he had thought since ; but at the first word or two, Muriel stopped him, saying he must not tire himself.

"I have misjudged you, Max, old friend," said Philip, "and caused you both terrible misery. Will you forgive me? And then we will ask Muriel to forgive us."

Max took his friend's hand, and turned his eyes eagerly to his wife.

"Muriel, I have thought so ill of you."

Muriel came forward ; her voice was sad and grave, but her face resolute.

"No," she said ; "let no one be blamed but me, for I have caused all this. Max, if I had been as true a woman as you are a true man, you would never have doubted me ; but your own instinct of

truth felt the want of truth in me. And, if it had not been for my falseness, I should have recognized your truth, and should have known that there must be some terrible mistake. Max, all my life long I have been false in little things. I have so hated discomfort and trouble, and I so longed for every one to think well of me, and praise me, that I did not think it very wicked to avoid what distressed me or to gain what I desired—to make life pleasant—by little, easy falsehoods. Max, that night Philip came here first, you tried to make me speak, and I would not, not knowing what you had heard. I supposed you were only thinking of my old engagement to Philip—you see, from what Philip had told me I supposed you knew of it—and I thought I would rather coax you into forgetting it, than have any trouble about it. If I had but spoken then, or, better still, if I had but told the truth at first! Even

that lie I told to shield you was a sin, and has helped to bring about this. But, O Max! if I have been weak in all else, I have been strong in this—that I have loved you. If you believe no other good of me, believe that. And yet, perhaps, if you were to forgive me, if you were still to be gentle and patient with me, and help me, who can tell but by Heaven's grace I might so mend my poor, pitiful, cowardly nature, that some day I should be worthy of you, and you could love me again?"

She had begun to speak standing far off, tearless and despairing. She ended sobbing on her knees beside him. Max stretched out his arms and drew her close to his heart.

Philip turned silently away, leaving the husband and wife alone together.

"It is best as it is," he said. "I had lost her long ago; and I have my friend still."

NEGLECTING THE PATTERN.

THE colors that we had to weave
 Were bright in our early years;
 But we wove the tissue wrong, and stained
 The woof with bitter tears.

We wove a web of doubt and fear—
 Not faith and hope and love—
 Because we looked at our work, and not
 At our Pattern up above!

PHOEBE CARY.

EASTER IN HISTORY.

TO trace the Easter festival to its origin we shall have to go back in Jewish history to that night when the chosen race, to save their little ones from the destroying angel who smote with death all of the oldest sons in the houses of the Egyptians, sprinkled the doorposts of their houses with the blood of a lamb, and sat down to a supper of flesh, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs preparatory to leaving the land of their bondage forever. Such was the inception of the Passover, which was always eaten on the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month—the month called Nisan, corresponding with our March and April. It was at the time of this feast that Jesus Christ, “the Lamb of God,” was crucified, and hence by His followers the Jewish feast was changed to a Christian festival.

For no little time there was a difficulty in the early Church in regard to the day of the week and the day of the month on which Easter should be celebrated. As the Christians held that Christ, the true paschal lamb, had been slain on the very day when the Jews in celebration of their Passover immolated the figurative lamb, so, both in the West and the East, those who believed the Christian Passover to be a commemoration of Christ's death adhered to the custom of holding the Easter festivity on the day prescribed for the Jewish Pasch. The great majority of Christian Churches, however, attached more importance to the

day of Christ's resurrection, which was the first day of the week (hence called the Lord's Day, our Sabbath), and therefore held to Easter being celebrated on that day and on the Sunday which followed the fourteenth day of the moon of March, the day on which Christ suffered.

The discussion was settled by the Council of Nicæa, in 325. It was agreed that the festival should always be kept on the Sunday after the first full moon following the twenty-first of March—the day when, as we say, “the sun crosses the line.” This rule adopted by the Nicene Council is the one which we still observe; and this fact explains the reason why Easter comes sometimes earlier, sometimes later, in the spring; it is because it always follows the moon. It cannot occur earlier than March 22d nor later than April 25th.

The origin of the English name Easter is traced to the old Teutonic or Saxon Goddess of Spring, Ostera or Eastre, whose festival occurred about the same time as our celebration of Easter. The general name in use among Christian nations is derived from the Hebrew word *pesach*, which meant “he passed over.” The French is *Pâques*; Italian, *Pasqua*; Spanish, *Pascua*, and the Latin, *Pascha*. In Scotland they call it *Pasch*, and in Holland *Paschen*. When England was first Christianized the missionaries found the people worshiping the Goddess of Spring, to whom the month of April, which they

called *Easter monath*, was sacred. After conversion took place, the Christian festival was substituted for the heathen one, but the old national name was retained, hence our word Easter.

Easter day, as commemorating the central fact of our religion, has always been regarded as the chief festival of the Christian year, and has been from the earliest times observed with a stately and elaborate ceremonial. The old chroniclers always deemed it important to tell us when the sovereigns kept their Easter and what was done on the occasion. Formerly the churches were ornamented with large wax candles, and the Christians saluted each other with a kiss and the words "Christ is risen," to which the response was made, "He is risen indeed." This custom is still retained in the Greek Church, particularly in Russia. The day before Easter Sunday, or Holy Saturday, has ever been set apart as a day for specially solemnizing baptism. Courts of justice were closed, alms were distributed, slaves were freed, and the people gave themselves up to enjoyment and feasting.

In France, from the middle of the twelfth century to the year 1564, when Charles IX fixed on January 1st, the year began on Easter Day. Many of the important events of history took place on Easter. It was on Easter that Alfred the Great won his great victory over the Danes, and it was on Easter that he was crowned. The coronations of other English kings took place on Easter, and many public papers and royal edicts were dated upon that day.

A good many curious customs and ceremonies have been observed in different parts of the world in connection with Easter. There is the one of boiling Pasch

eggs and coloring them with bright-hued dyes, which is still celebrated in some countries. The origin of this custom goes back to the old Egyptians, with whom the egg was a sacred emblem. One of the popular dishes of the Passover in Jewish households to-day is a plate of boiled eggs. It was natural enough that the early Christians should have adopted the custom and given it a new meaning. One of the old writers gravely informs us that "the egg is an emblem of the rising up out of the grave, in the same manner as the chick, entombed, as it were, in the egg, is in due time brought to life." The eggs were at first dyed scarlet, in memory of the blood of Christ.

The game of ball was a favorite Easter sport, in which municipal corporations formerly engaged with due parade and dignity, and at Bury St. Edmunds, England, within a few years the game was kept up with great spirit by twelve old women. In the "black county" of Staffordshire and some neighboring districts, the day after Easter is still called "Heave Monday," from the old and now happily almost discontinued custom of the men "lifting" the women on that day, while on Easter Tuesday the women took their revenge by "lifting" the men.

There was another custom of dividing two very large cakes among the congregation at the church on Easter. In 1645 Parliament passed a law forbidding this, and providing that the money which had formerly been spent for the cakes should in future be used to buy bread for the poor.

A tansy pudding, symbolical of the bitter herbs commanded to be eaten at the paschal feast, was an old time Easter Monday dish.

H. M. GEORGE.

THE "FESTIVAL OF THE SEASONS" AT CLOVERFIELD.

SUPPER is just over in Mrs. Narrows's large, old-fashioned dining-room, and Mandy is walking to and fro from the kitchen, carrying her hands full of toppling dishes, that threaten every moment to yield to the attraction of gravitation and fall with a demolishing bounce on the floor; the coals in the fire-place are glowing and sparkling with beautiful colors, reflecting their brilliant faces in the polished andirons on either side of the hearth, and making Tom, the cat, wink and blink in sleepy content, as he feels their comfortable glow all over his glossy black fur.

Although the beginning of spring, the evenings are still chilly, and a warm blaze is something to be desired; so the Deacon, with feet higher than his head, is leaning cozily back in his favorite rocking-chair near the fire, picking his teeth and complacently glancing through the columns of the *Cloverfield Intelligencer*, giving every now and then a satisfactory "Humph" as an interesting passage strikes his attention, while Joshua, with his wonderful eight-blade knife, is cutting a remarkable watch-charm out of a last year's hickory nut, letting his little, sharp pieces fall occasionally—accidentally, of course—on Tom's nose, making him start and jump, and forcing him to keep one yellow eye open in blissful anticipation of coming favors.

Mrs. Narrows has just seated herself in the full glow of the lamp, with her knitting, and is holding up her glasses to the

light, breathing on them and polishing them off with her pocket handkerchief.

She is about taking up her needles, preparatory to counting off her stitches for the heel of her stocking, when Rover's bark is heard outside, then wheels become audible, and, a moment after, merry voices, a knock at the door, a rush of chilly air into the comfortable hall, Maud Torbert's voice asking, "Is the Deacon at home?" and then into the warm, cheerful dining-room come a half-dozen girls, all fresh and sparkling after their merry ride.

"O Deacon!" impetuously begins Maggie May, after the customary salutations are over and Mrs. Narrows has warmly welcomed them into her cozy home room, "we were so afraid you would be out, and we have things of such importance to talk about, haven't we, girls?" signifying she needs encouragement by the knowing glances she throws around.

"Yes, indeed," continues Marian Dale, answering the look, and then stopping short, leaving an embarrassed pause.

"O Maud! you know all about it. You tell Deacon Narrows, won't you, for I am sure we cannot?"

"What! more mischief on foot?" exclaims the Deacon, breaking his toothpick into small pieces, and looking at the youthful intruders with a suppressed twinkle in his eye.

Maud is about commencing, cautiously, her important information, when the door

is again thrown open, this time to admit the boys, and before they have finished handshaking Will Barr exclaims, abruptly:

"Well, girls, are you to have your bazar?"

"Bazar!" ejaculates Deacon Narrows, almost upsetting himself in his impatience to stand up, and scattering the shower of toothpicks all over Tom's tail—"bazar! Not if I know myself! Not all the money in Cloverfield could induce me to have another of those pesky things within five miles of Ebenezer Church, much less inside its walls! Why, the last time we undertook a 'ladies' bazar we did not make one cent, but ran in debt, and had more baby caps, infant sacques, and female aprons on hand than we could possibly dispose of; nobody wanted them, we couldn't give them away, and finally we were obliged to send them all out to India to dress up the native population in Hindoostan! If that is what you have come to ask about, girls, you might just as well talk up the chimney, for nothing short of a famine or cyclone could ever persuade me into a bazar," and the Deacon, in his excitement, stands up, resolute, and shakes his coat tails defiantly in the face of the fire.

"O Will! you have spoiled it all," whispers Maud, despondently. "How could you be so rash! Deacon," she continues aloud, in a voice out of which all the courage, strength, and force seem to have departed, leaving it limp and ragged as a pincushion without sawdust, "what we want to have is not at all, *at all*, like a bazar! It isn't even called a bazar—indeed, indeed it isn't! This is one of the nicest, newest ways to make money we know of—"

"New or old," interrupts the Deacon once more, emphasizing each separate word with such brisk flourishes of the already smoking coat tails that a little, disagreeable burning smell begins to arise, and he has to move and finish beating the

poor, innocent things against the side of the mantelpiece—"new or old," he repeats, "I tell you, if it bears any relation to a bazar, if it is only a forty-fifth cousin removed, I'll have none of it!" and he stands on his toes and brings his heels down two or three times in resolute defiance.

"But, Jonathan," interposes little Mrs. Narrows, seeing the consternation his words have caused and the disappointment and dejection visible on all her dear young faces, "Maud says it isn't even called a bazar! The boys did not know! Listen, my dear, to the girls' side first, before giving such a decided refusal! We know you are always reasonable and kind, and want to do whatever is right."

"Well, if it is to be anything like the 'Mum Sociable,' 'Clipping Bee,' or any other of the new-fashioned capers we have been having in Cloverfield lately, I'm willing to listen to reason and be convinced," replies the Deacon, a little ashamed of his hasty outbreak, and considerably mollified by this gentle, soothing flattery of his wife's. "But you are sure there will be no infant sacques to dispose of afterward?"

"No! no! not one, I promise you," begins poor Maud again, this time breathing more freely and gaining courage, when Sam Marshall, thinking to help the cause along, interrupts:

"Why, Deacon, what in the world would the four seasons want with infants?"—when a vigorous pinch on his toe causes him to stop suddenly and wince, and almost threatens annihilation to his foot.

To fill up the awkward pause occasioned by this, poor Sam's well-meant but unfortunate proceeding, Mrs. Narrows rises quietly and carefully fills the Deacon's already richly colored pipe, while he, delicately and tenderly lighting its fragrant contents and inhaling the rich aroma of this soother of troubled spirits, feels himself gradually restored to good humor,

and watches with interest the little clouds of curly smoke as they ascend softly and caressingly envelop his head.

At a slight signal from Mrs. Narrows, Maud commences, for the third time; the introductory remarks to her all-important proposition, and says, a little nervously:

"What we have been talking over and thinking about having is called the 'Festival of the Seasons.' Each of the four corners of the Sunday-school room will have to be appropriately fitted up to represent one, thus making spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Now, as spring is already here," proceeds Maud, gaining confidence from the silence and evident interest of her principal listener, "we propose to make it rather of a spring celebration also, and have the corner dedicated to spring the most conspicuous and beautiful of the four, while the others will be arranged according to the seasons they represent, and will contain refreshments for sale, each corresponding with the time of year they are supposed to designate. You know, Deacon Narrows, we have been very successful in everything we have undertaken so far, and our 'Home Mission Fund' is so very low at present that we are particularly desirous of raising a little money to replenish it. We all agree that this is a most charming idea for an entertainment, and we intend to make the admission fee only ten cents, so that this very modest demand may be within reach of all."

"The small sum you speak of, my dear Maud," replies the Deacon, now thoroughly quieted down and still puffing away his clouds of fragrant incense, "is, I am sure, only a very feminine way of raising a much larger one; for if once you catch the poor, unsuspecting flies inside the net of your 'festival,' and show them all the good things you have prepared, I am afraid they will be obliged to succumb to your allurements and open their pocket-books a little wider. Still, your project seems a very pretty, emblematic idea to

me, and as the 'Home Mission' resources are, I know, at present very much reduced, I think you had better talk over your plans with mother there at more length, while I challenge one of these conceited boys to a game of backgammon. Now, lads, who will beat me? Oh! you all will!" seeing how quickly they have all acquiesced. "Well, one at a time, if you please. Quinton Rulon, as I already owe you three games on our old score, suppose I begin by publicly beating you?"

* * * * *

A lovely moonlight night is the evening set apart for the celebration of the "Festival of the Seasons," and all Cloverfield is again astir with curiosity, anticipation, and eagerness to participate again in another of the series of entertainments that have been the talk of the country for miles round their happy village.

Miss Mellowleaf has again opened her much valued old trunk, and taken from its egg and chicken money a bright half dollar, that she thinks will not be too much to spend on the evening's possibilities.

"We must help the young folks along," says this good old lady to her friend, Miss Primington, who is waiting to accompany her to the church, "and what better could I do with the money than help clothe the poor and needy of the parish?"

They meet plenty of company on the road, and see them going in by couples and crowds as they approach the church door. How familiar are many of the faces to us also, and we recognize many of our old friends from Sparrow Brook and Meadow Banks as wagon after wagon drives up and unloads its laughing, chattering freight.

Must we introduce Mr. and Mrs. Speakwell again, as they come into the old, familiar Sunday-school room arm in arm, or do you recognize, in the blushing bride, our merry young friend, Lucy Meadows? How happy they look, and how modestly they receive congratulations

from all sides; indeed, so many and so embarrassing do these become at length, from all her old acquaintance, that Lucy is glad of an excuse to turn the tide of conversation, and exclaims, suddenly:

"O girls! how perfectly lovely the room looks—almost like fairy land! You have arranged things beautifully!"

"Do let the boys claim some of the laurels!" interposes Will Barr, "for they could not have gotten along at all without us; we helped put up the booths, and did all the carpentering, and hard, ugly work! Bestow some of your well-deserved praise on us!"

"Oh! how charming! How beautiful!" is heard from all sides, and, in truth, the room does look like an enchanted garden.

At the upper left-hand corner, conspicuously ornamental, is the Spring or Flower Booth, and here flowers are everywhere! Fresh young field violets, their odorous purple blossoms tied in delicate bunches; white, yellow-hearted daisies, lying around in such profuse quantities as only render them more beautiful, while clusters of dainty, yellow, bell-shaped cowslips rest side by side with fragrant white and purple clover. Here and there a tall stately calla raises its head proudly above its less royal sisters of the meadows; and modest, shy groups of lilies-of-the-valley lie in the shadow of their sheltering green leaves, bestowing glances of wondering admiration at the more brilliant-hued azaleas, as they brighten and beautify the whole with their rich, warm colors. Crocuses, tulips, and hyacinths are peeping out from hidden corners, and various emblematic dainty cards and tokens are hung conspicuously and greet the eye at all points.

The occupants behind this bower of loveliness are all dressed in the freshest of springy costumes, and make a charming tableau as they offer for sale their fragrant bunches, spring mottoes, etc.

Just across from this flower-laden scene, in the upper right-hand corner of the

room, is the Summer Booth; and here is pitched a large tent, gaudily decorated with Japanese lanterns, fans, screens, and other characteristic devices of the season's warmth; inside are arranged small tables and chairs, while the girls and boys, in broad-brim hats, gayly dressed as harvesters, serve the ices, creams, lemonade, and other cooling beverages.

Below this merry summer picture, in the lower right-hand corner, a canvas is hung to rudely represent a barn, under whose ample folds are again tables and seats, while around this improvised room ordinary, little, attractive baskets of fruit, dried herbs, bunches of wheat, and dried corn are arranged artistically, and the attendants, appropriately dressed, serve apples, bananas, nuts, figs, oranges, grapes, etc.

The last corner, or Winter Booth, is heavily draped, to also form a room, with curtains, rugs, and buffalo robes, and a few friendly easy chairs and lounges scattered around serve to give one the idea of the warmest and coziest of welcomes; and here, while taking their ease luxuriously, customers are served hot coffee, chocolate, and delicately appetizing biscuits and cakes; those officiating in this comfortable quarter all wearing dark, woolen dresses, ornamented with dainty caps and aprons.

The whole varied scene, taking it all together, is a charming one, and judging by the look of admiration and delight expressed on the happy faces of the audience, the Cloverfield girls know this last venture of theirs is a more decided success than any of its forerunners.

But around the Spring Booth a gay little crowd is fast collecting, for a whisper is circulating through the room that at this principal corner they have for sale the little surprise-souvenir of the evening. Marian Dale is kept busy exchanging silver dimes for these curiously suspicious-looking tokens, and the demand almost threatens to exceed the supply.

"You know," she says to Paul Upton, as she captures his bright little piece of silver, and tantalizingly holds her pretty favor as far as possible from his grasp, "I am not allowed to deliver this into your hands until you faithfully promise that you will not remove the cork until the hour and minute hand on the clock point ten, and all other possessors in the room are privileged to open theirs."

"I promise!" answers Paul, solemnly, impressively laying his hand on his heart, taking from her fingers and examining his captured treasure, while several of the others look over his shoulder and compare it with theirs.

"Yes, they are all alike!" exclaims Herbert Wells. "Every mysterious little one of them! Nothing in the world but the tiniest of small bottles, carefully covered with tinted paper up to its little gilded cork, daintily tied with a gay colored ribbon, and suspiciously labeled, '*Cure for Love.*' They only differ in the various tints of the ribbon and paper, and I should not wonder if they all contained nothing but a big dose of homœopathic pills, and we shall all be compelled to swallow the contents."

"Well, they are pretty to look at, at all events," answered Daisy Banks, "and I, for one, mean to keep mine, even if what is inside is nasty and has to be thrown away!"

"You take my word for it, we shall all be fooled the very minute these corks are lifted!" said Sam Marshall, wisely shaking his finger at the assembled crowd.

"Deacon Narrows, I do not know which season I like best!" exclaims Deacon Merrifield, of Sparrow Brook, as he warmly shakes his neighbor by the hand. "They are all so bright, and pretty, and the girls in Cloverfield are regular geniuses in the way of decorating and astonishing one. Do look at that merry group eating ices round the summer harvesters! Could anything be more picturesque?"

"Very pretty, very pretty indeed!"

answers his old friend, but you and I, brother, like our ease and comfort too much to be able to resist those inviting, cozy, easy chairs in the winter corner, that I see have just been vacated. Have you tried our Cloverfield coffee yet? No! Then let us rest awhile there, and talk over this new project on foot in regard to your Sunday-school library!"

"Miss Brightly," cries Mr. Springfield, coming up to that youthful ancient maiden, as she stands talking with Miss Primington and Miss Mellowleaf, "have you seen those pretty cloved pears they have for sale in the Autumn Barn?"

"Cloved pears!" cry all three ladies in a breath. "Are they meant to eat?"

"No! no, indeed!" answers Mr. Springfield; "better than that—meant to keep in commemoration of this event. But come with me to the 'Barn,' and I shall take great pleasure in presenting each of you with one as a spicy remembrance of the giver. Ha! ha! Mr. Rulon," he continues, to that happy youth, who, in company with Lily Vale, is presiding over these aromatic treasures, "three pears, if you please. Yes, that is right, pick out the prettiest!"

"Oh! may I have the one tied with pink ribbon, Mr. Springfield? I do so adore pink! You don't object, do you, Mr. Springfield?" cries Miss Sophie, regarding him coquettishly with her faded blue eyes.

"Bless my soul, no! Take your choice, certainly."

"Oh! thank you!" "Thank you!" "Thank you!" echo the delighted recipients, while Miss Mellowleaf, examining hers minutely, says: "Isn't it a capital idea! You see, it is only a large prettily shaped pear completely packed with cloves, stuck just as close as you can get them, all over the surface, the long stem of the pear being preserved and tied with a bow of ribbon. What a lovely little ornament it will make for my mantel, and how fragrant it is!"

All too soon does the happy evening glide away, and all too quickly does the familiar old clock tick out the rapid, joyous seconds.

"I have only five minutes in which to make my speech!" exclaims Deacon Narrows, as he smilingly looks over his audience; "that is if I wish to be in time for the last great surprise of this merry evening. I mean this wonderful, curious, mysterious little object labeled '*Cure for Love.*' They say 'brevity is the soul of wit,' so let us be brief. As the four corners of this dear old room have been made bright and beautiful for your benefit by our Young People's Association tonight, so have the four corners of our empty mission box been filled and made precious by your hearty appreciation and generosity. Our hearts are happy; our inner wants have been satisfied by the many various appetizing morsels prepared for our selection; our eyes have been feasted with beautiful living pictures and lovely flowers; our comfort has been studied, and our anticipations more than realized; let us then thank the 'Mission Band' for the merry hours we have so joyously spent at this, their 'Spring Reception,' and heartily and unanimously wish them 'the compliments of the seasons.'"

As the Deacon finishes and makes his bow toward the young people, a little bell rings out the signal for the souvenirs to be opened.

There is a breathless pause, and no one dares to be the first. Dread seems to take the place of curiosity, and an awful fear that the mysterious little bottles may

explode if looked into too closely falls upon every one. At last Charlie Sparks, standing in the middle of the floor, a look of determination on his face, announces his intention of solving the mystery. Holding the tiny souvenir cautiously and as far as possible from his head, and saying, "I hope it is not gunpowder, boys," he slowly and carefully eases the cork.

You could hear a pin drop, and all eyes are alive and riveted on the little gilded stopper, as it silently and gradually rises and shows a very slender thread that seems hung from the middle. As Charlie continues to lift it slowly, slowly upward, there comes suddenly into view a tiny speck of red, and this increasing, a universal shout of laughter greets its advent, for there, cut out of bright red flannel, hangs suspended the shape of a tiny, tiny miniature—MITTEN.

"Sold!" cries the owner of this "*Cure for Love,*" laughing and enjoying the joke as well as any one, and "Mitten, mitten, who's got the mitten?" is sung out on all sides.

"Why, girls, it is as light as day," cries Jennie Fielding, as a party of the "Mission Band" are gayly sauntering homeward. "Even the 'man in the moon' is laughing at us and throwing diamond dust under our feet! He looks happy, also, to know that spring is here; still, like us, I don't believe that he can tell which season he cares for the most, for he shines bright and lovely on all. Don't you think if he has a choice it must be spring?"

LAURA S. LEHR.



AUNT PRUE'S LITTLE ROMANCE.

AUNT PRUE was what might be called "a genius!" Words could never do her justice! She knew more than anybody else in the world (so the neighbors thought), and what couldn't be found in the comical little shop where she had served for so many years could not be found at all!

It was, indeed, a wonderful conglomeration of cambrics, flannels, calicoes, yarn, Winslow's syrup, gay picture books, and handkerchiefs, with every conceivable device upon them, from the "Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers" to the illimitable songs and illustrations of "Mother Goose!"

Above the shelves hung bundles of spearmint, peppermint, bone-set, tansy, catnip, sassafras, and birch bark, gathered, in part, by her friends in the country, who knew what a "penchant" she had for these "medicinal things," which all went into the common store stock under the head of "*yarbs*," while from the low ceiling overhead were suspended all manner of earthly goods, from a broom to a three-tined fork and ox yoke!

And, not to forget the children, who daily came with their pennies, one small window in this elaborate country store was devoted to a rare stock of candies, tin whistles, tops, gingerbread, dolls, and cats with eyes and without; and last, but not by any means least, in this same window were placed various specimens of crockery that might come within the common wants of the country people for miles around.

Back of the store, and where Aunt

Prudence lived, was a cheerful little room as clean and as bright as scrubbing and polishing could make it, possessing a fine show of plated ware upon the two shelves of the old dresser, looking in its antiquity as if it might have come over in the Mayflower, and even then aged; a deal table, with a square of home-made carpet beneath it; six cane-bottomed chairs, with their movable cushions inclined to wriggle away from the sitter in a most unaccountable manner; two settees, and one huge arm-chair, in which Aunt Prue might often be found engulfed when the business of the day was over, and where she drew sighs a fathom deep, with none to hear; a hearth-rug on the patch-work principle, and a few enormous conch shells and ancient daguerreotypes, ornamenting the broad, old-fashioned chimney mantel.

A tidy home, as you see, that even boasted the luxury of flowers, represented by one rose-bush and four scraggy geraniums, that seemed from their very appearance to object most seriously to the nursing they daily received. But though their branches were almost bare, and they looked as if they *longed* to be gone, Aunt Prue confidently affirmed that though their looks *were* against them, they were positively "green in the wood still!" and some day would astonish her by an outburst of leaf!

She was not very unlike these ungainly plants herself—of frail exterior, spare of form and lean, and yet she, too, was "green in the wood!" She had fought hard and well for an honest living; some people

called her "stuck up" and proud; and yet every little brimless-hatted urchin in the whole neighborhood loved her and thought her the nicest, handsomest woman in all the world—her very voice in itself was a whole story of hospitality.

Year in and year out, Aunt Prue's cheery face glowed behind the counter, sometimes knitting baby's socks or bigger boy's stockings while waiting for customers or making some intricate pattern of tatting, the bobbin flying from left to right in the most mysterious way, or which pleased the children better, raveling out yarn from some half-worn-out stocking, to be applied to the heads of peculiar rag dolls of her own manufacture.

Aunt Prudence in her youth had been a beauty, and many an old man and matron, as they met her in her gay ribbons tripping along the road of a sunny Sunday morning, would wonder where in the world she got her beauty from; and well they might, contrasting her sparkling face with the ill-natured visage of her father, who, tortured with rheumatism, often hobbled fretfully at her side. She was the last human prop of his old age, and for what she was to him, he so regarded her.

A stern, unyielding descendant of the "Mayflower" was old farmer Jones, of Toptown. Many a crop had he planted with his own hands, many a harvest gathered in when in his health and prime, in addition to the little store in which poor Prue had been immured from earliest childhood, in order that it might yield an added income to the penurious old man.

She was a gentle, dependent creature, a delicate plant, springing up in a sterile soil, and reaching forth tendrils in vain for some object to cling to, but when the village children would shy as her father passed, and even the dogs laid their ears back and almost howled at his presence, you may believe that a pall of gloom was always thrown over the otherwise glad spirit of the child, who never remembered to have seen him smile.

And now he had gone and handed over the business to Prue, and it was strange, as the years went by, to see how popular she had become. The spirits that had been so early crushed began to assume their natural exuberance, and though years had passed and time had whitened the hair that was once a glossy black, he had not deprived her of a pair of dark, lustrous eyes, which gave to her careworn visage a certain air of coquetry, added to the fanciful twist of the gay ribbons which she yet wore about her neck, and which made the children say of her, "Aunt Prue is never going to be an old woman."

No wonder she was liked, for she had come to be a sort of good fairy in the neighborhood, skillful at anything she undertook. She could compound wonderful salves for obstinate felons and appetizing dishes for invalids, pick and arrange all sorts of simples and herbs, dress very young babies in their first costume or prepare any for burial, driving about for an hour in her neighbor's wagon now and then, meanwhile turning the key of her little shop that she might carry some dainty to those who needed it. She might have carried them tracts instead of turkeys, but somehow she didn't run to tracts, though she taught in school every Sunday and gave many a lesson through the week, and was in very truth a helpmeet to the old minister of the town. Do you say this is cold, unblest duty-work, as some would have it? I do not think so.

The window in Aunt Prue's little shop looked out upon the waters of the ocean, where the ships could be seen distinctly as they passed up and down the harbor; there, when on shore, the frolicking captains would gather around the stove of a winter's night. It had been their custom for many a year, even when farmer Jones had been one of the company. The record of the evenings spent in that little village store, with its long yarns and

rustic gossip, would have made an inexhaustible volume in the characters they depicted.

Jerry Marples was one among the number—an improved type of the native element of Toptown, many of whom would have been a rare study to the student of character. He was a stout, stalwart fellow, his round face set in disheveled locks of coal-black hair, and an element of power in his face, which, with a lively twinkle in his eye and a good word for everybody, fully atoned for the lack of polish or the absence of symmetry.

He had been to sea before the mast, and at two-and-twenty stood among the officers of the good ship "Dreadnought" as first mate. From the time he left his village home he had loved Prue, and for her sake he had determined to make himself famous.

Having been the confidant of her stern father, he had learned that he must wait for the time when she had become so little to him that he would willingly surrender her to another. But there had been then and there grafted upon her young years a something of knowledge—a sweet secret that she would keep so well that no one would ever guess it.

"Three years is a long time to be gone, Prue, dear, but I may come home captain some day, and to know that *you'll* look for my coming will compensate for *any* absence; but you have seen so few besides me, Prue, and somebody might rob me of you, you know."

But as Prue saw the strong, great soul that looked so lovingly out of those deep brown eyes, she felt that nowhere in the whole world would she find another whom she would deign to compare with Jerry Marples, as she answered him, timidly, "How I shall long for and wait for your coming no one shall ever know!" She little dreamed *how* long.

And so the proud sailor-boy went on his long cruise, and Prue went about her

usual avocations, and the long, blue stretches of water lay between them.

At first letters came from Jerry whenever an opportunity offered. With one came a ring of blue turquoise set like a wreath of forget-me-nots, begging her to wear it as the seal of his undying affection. He told her of his success. "I am captain, now," he wrote, "and am getting rich, too, and in another year I shall come and claim you for my own; you will wait for me, dear Prue?" "*Forever!*" she had answered.

It required all Prue's feminine tact and diplomacy to conceal her little secret from the prying spinsters of Toptown, and to hide the tell-tale blush, when the ring would occasionally adorn her finger, fearing that it might be gazed upon with too special an emphasis.

But the days went by, and the weeks and the months, and no further tidings from Jerry. Spring violets bloomed, summer roses blushed and faded, autumn fruits ripened, and winter snows whitened the fields, bringing to Prue little variety. Every opening flower gave her a fresh pang, and when they faded only added another hidden one, as they not only proclaimed his long-continued absence, but silence.

Other women might have doubted—other women with happier lives—women to whom God's best gifts had been given, but not this one—not this little woman, through whose dark sky the single rift of heaven's sunshine had only struggled to die out in drearier darkness. Could she have loved and trusted and waited these many years, and then have doubted or forgotten?—forgotten after weary days—after the lonely nights, wherein no star appeared?—forgotten after the simple, faithful prayers, even though these had been given no answer when she knelt alone, with her face hidden in her white bed, to say "Our Father," and to plead for him?—"not that there was any need of it," she reasoned, faithful woman that

she was, for was he not a great deal more noble than she could ever be—as “far above her as the shining of the stars?” but if she prayed very hard God might send one beautiful angel to keep charge over him and bring him back in peace and safety, which she felt sure would come if a hundred years should pass and she should live them all alone.

But, after all, it had come to be a weary waiting when ten long years had passed, and wearier yet when another ten were added to them. She would be an old, worn-out woman before her wedding day, and would it *ever* come at all?

No wonder that visions of far-off countries beyond the ocean, where a new life might have dawned for her and where in its sweetness it might have shielded her from all that was harsh and lonely in reality, came always and ever into her thoughts through all these years, or that in her dreams white-sailed ships glided into sight, and, stately as dreams, vanished again whence they seemed to come, as ever and anon, like a sweet air that lingers and shapes itself in memory, Jerry's parting words dwelt in her mind: “To know that you'll look for my coming will compensate for any absence.” Why, the very thought of him was *always* like the fresh, cool wind coming over the mountains.

But what has become of the long-absent lover and his ardent affection, while Prue was living through her small romance, unpromising and ordinary as it had proved? Let us see. Not long after Jerry's departure across the seas, Prue had received most earnest proposals from old Mr. Polk, the wealthy Jew of the neighborhood, and a fine, comely man he was, too. The first time he saw her he came to buy shoe-laces at the little variety store, and from that day he set his mark upon her; but *how* little he knew the secret which prompted her at once and decidedly to reject his suit.

And still he came to the store at the twilight hour to chat with the jolly “old

tars” who gathered there nightly, and hear of their wonderful exploits by sea and by land, but *really* to get a sly look at Prue, who, even as he sat in their midst, would wander away to the shore and watch the waves as they curled and swelled and broke, while the breezes swept her cheek and quickened her pulse as she dreamed and dreamed, and no one knew of *what* she dreamed—this woman with the lonely, aching, but ever-faithful heart.

“I suppose you know that the signal has been spoken outside, and our old friend, Jerry Marples, is on board, they say. Don't you remember him? Why he's been gone mor'n twenty years,” said Captain Baker one morning when he came into Prue's store for his usual allowance of tobacco. *She*—remember him! Ah, how little they knew!

Prue made an effort to speak, that tall, strong-featured woman, but her wonderful self-control folded those thin lips into utter silence. It had come upon her so suddenly! How *could* she believe it?

But that morning the mail-bag that brought tidings to Toptown brought Prue, too, a letter in a handwriting that she would have almost forgotten if she could ever forget *anything* that related to Jerry, telling her of the shameful slight heaped on her loving soul; how he had heard of her impending marriage with old Squire Polk, and thenceforward released her from her bonds. But from that moment the light had gone out of his life, and he had wandered hither and thither, over land and sea, from port to port, not caring ever again to step foot upon the old familiar shore, and how, only six months before, he had seen the first *home* face for many a year, Captain Bruce it was, always one of the most welcome at the little stove-corner in the little store, who had contradicted the whole matter; and now he was hurrying home to make reparation for the wrong he had done. “I shall soon be at that green spot of earth, where is all I hold dear. Will you see me, Prue?” he wrote.

Prue's brain reeled for a moment, and then grew steady. In the afternoon of that same day, just as the sun was drawing nigh its setting, and twilight was creeping up the path, up to Prue's very feet, folding her in as she sat alone in the little low store with its heavy shadows in its corners, all the light and coloring drawn to a focus, while a fluttering of bright autumn coloring glorified the little brown house, too great brown eyes looked in upon her.

She met him, noble soul as he was, with her arms outstretched and folded his strong, shaken body into her warm woman's clasp, not forgetting, for she had never remembered; not forgiving, for the supreme simplicity of her character had seen no wrong to forgive.

The next day the little store was closed. What could it mean? Nine o'clock, ten, eleven, and not a shutter down! Lame Jenny was waiting for yarn, old Simpkins for sugar, the children impatient to spend their odd pennies, while the sailor captains were stamping their feet in vexation at the long delay.

But the store did not open again for Prudence Jones, and in course of time all the maidens of Toptown came to know that Jerry Marples, the hazel-eyed man

with the still swift step, and "Dear Aunt Prue" had resolved to travel the journey of life together, be it rough or smooth; and the only wonder in their minds was however she managed to get such a husband, and how it was hurried up, after he had been away for so many years.

And so old Toptown was all alive with this new sensation. The little brown house was completely metamorphosed. Even Tabby, the cat, did not step in the old, appointed way. The stiff, hard-bottomed chairs of old 'Squire Jones's time were replaced by something more modern and comfortable; the old yellow settees, that had stood from time immemorial by the side of the fireplace, were covered with a pretty red chintz, cushioned softly; while the whitest of white muslin curtains adorned the windows; and beyond all, Prue herself fluttering about as sole mistress of the new household, with her sprightly, winning ways, showing how surely the time had come when her day-dreams had become realities, and though years had passed over her head, with their frost and their blight, they had left her heart still "green in the wood," and ready to bud and blossom into a more consecrated service for him whom she had watched and waited for so many years.

MRS. G. NALL.

RELIGIOUS READING.

WORK IN THE VINEYARD.

AS the year advances upon us, with all its duties, responsibilities, and opportunities, the command comes to us afresh, as it has come each year throughout all the ages to the children of our common Father: "Son, go work to-day in my vineyard."

For this was not spoken only for the disciples who followed the Master's footsteps over the hills of Judea and the plains of Jericho, and sat listening to His precepts as they rocked upon the waves of the Sea of Galilee.

Not for these alone, who mended their fishing nets in the humble homes of Bethsaida and Capernaum, or sowed the seed in the fields around Him, or dressed the vines upon the sunny hillsides which lay before Him as He walked and taught.

His teachings were intended for all future generations of those who follow Him—sometimes with earnest heart and will, sometimes with lagging feet and careless or unwilling minds.

"Go work in the vineyard!" Where is this vineyard? Is it not lying right around us in our daily lives? And how large a field for action is spread before us in this moral vineyard, where we ought to work earnestly and perseveringly all the time—laboring industriously while it is day, remembering that "the night cometh, when no man can work." How many unsightly branches are to be pruned away from the maturing vines, and wayward, straying ones trained into proper place; young, tender shoots to be encouraged, and weak, sickly vines to be nourished and strengthened with gentle care.

If the son is a faithful worker he will find his time and talents fully employed,

and even when the work grows hard and painful, life may be made a grand and noble thing by unswerving adherence to it in the line of duty.

But some are careless and thoughtless, and see not the importance of such work. Their chief care is for their own comfort and pleasure; their time is given to the enjoyment of to-day. Or, if not upon themselves entirely, their care is spent exclusively on those who are immediately their own, and they seem to forget or ignore the claims of a common brotherhood—the great human family around them.

There are others for whom we should work as well as ourselves. There are thousands from whom the cry is heard, "Come into the vineyard and help us!" And there are thousands who can do so in one way and another, if they but bend their wills and energies to it, without neglecting their nearer duties to themselves or their own.

There are light and comfort to carry to myriads of hearts and homes, burdens to lift, rough pathways to smooth, humble offices of help to perform for one another.

There is work to do in the homes for the friendless, the orphan asylums, private hospitals, and poorhouses, the various missionary societies and church guilds, and many other fields of benevolent labor.

There is abundant, urgent work for earnest hearts in the temperance cause, where every true man and woman ought to give whatever assistance is in their power to rescue our land from the terrible foe that is ruining its thousands and tens of thousands yearly.

Ministers and orators can lend their aid from the pulpit and the rostrum. Writers can wield their pens in furtherance of

the cause. Mothers and sisters can use their influence in banishing wine and strong drink from the table and the home, and in seeing that the children are all encouraged to enroll themselves in "Bands of Hope" societies, that the rising generation may come up a mighty force, ready to put down the evil and to people the land with steady, temperate men and women, able to govern *themselves* and the nation.

And the girls can do a noble work in abolishing the custom of offering wine at their entertainments, and in using every effort that is proper and womanly to induce their companions of the other sex to be temperate men.

If all who could would labor as they *should* in this one field, in a few years from this the shout of thanksgiving could go up from all the land, over victories gained that would make our country happier than would any other reform that could be accomplished.

"Go, work *to-day* in my vineyard." Especial thought should be given to the third word in this admonition. The command is not for next year or next week; not even to-morrow is left for our choosing or convenience; but, "work *to-day*." For no man can promise himself to-morrow. *It* may belong to his eternity. His hour for action is the present one.

To the man that was contemplating the building of larger barns in which to store

his goods, the Lord said: "*This night shall thy soul be required of thee.*"

To-day is the time appointed for doing what He bids us, without hesitation or procrastination, without complaint or rebellion, but cheerfully going forward to labor faithfully throughout the day, and gather in the harvest when it is ended.

So many refuse at first to do this bidding, as did one of the sons in the parable, especially when it is to follow Him, to walk in His footsteps, and to work in His Church on earth—the spiritual part of the vineyard—although they repent afterward in later years and do good service.

So many wait until the eleventh hour, and although they receive a reward, every one according to his work, yet the best part of life is lost, and they have missed half the pleasure they might have enjoyed in serving Him and must feel unending regret over wasted time. Let us each resolve that such an experience shall not be ours.

Let us take each month as a gift intrusted to us for use and improvement, and work in such a manner that our labor and time shall not be wasted or its results laid up as witnesses against us.

And when the Lord of the vineyard comes to take account of what has been done, may we be found ready and worthy to receive the rewarding words—"Well done, good and faithful servant."

LICHEN.



MOTHERS.

ACTION READING.

"THE Third Reader class may take slates and pencils," said Miss Rose, one warm, tiresome summer afternoon, during that dreadful hour just before school closes, when you feel as if you couldn't possibly stand it one minute longer.

"We will try a new way of reading," she explained, as restless hands arranged desks, and tired eyes brightened at the thought of a change. "You are to read my actions. That is, I will look and act in different ways, and you may write sentences expressing in words what you think I express in actions."

"Ready, now?" she went on. "This is my first thought;" and six rows of eager eyes gave closest attention as she dropped wearily into her chair, leaned her head on her hand, and pushed a pile of books from her with an impatient shove.

Quick eyes flashed appreciation of the sentiment, and ready pencils translated it into words.

"What have you, Johnny?" and the most restless of all the boys in the room rose promptly, and read as if he were glad of the chance, "Botheration! Wish I didn't have to study these stupid old books."

"That's pretty near it," smiled the teacher; "Nannie, read yours," as a brown little hand was raised in the second row.

"O dear! I am so tired, and my head aches hard," responded Nannie.

"That's good. But didn't some of you get three sentences?"

No one answered; so she repeated the pantomime, more slowly and emphatically this time. A murmur of comprehension ran around the class, and once more busy pencils spoke for their owners.

"Now, Jennie;" and the least pupil in the room rose and read, "I am just tired out. I have such a bad headache. I don't want to study any more."

"That is it exactly; but now write this;" and the drooping head was raised determinedly, the shoulders straightened against the chairback, and the spelling book was opened resolutely, with a quick glance at the clock. Some of the children hesitated, but most of them wrote promptly, with increased energy.

"Sam may read;" and the curly-headed boy gave, with strong emphasis, "But I don't care if my head does ache; I'm going to learn this spelling lesson before school closes, head or no head."

"Very good, Sam," said Miss Rose, laughing with the others; "I believe you will, too, when we get through reading. Now take this," walking quickly to the door, which she opened, glancing up with a pleased smile and holding out her hand. Then, leading her imaginary visitor to a seat by Elmer Oliver, she returned to her desk.

This was a little puzzling, and some queer interpretations were offered; but by dint of questions and suggestions, they finally concluded, as Harvey read it: "Why, how do you do, Marvin? I am glad you are able to visit us. Will you take your old seat with Elmer?"

Marvin was one of the boys who had been sick a long time, but was expected back soon.

After this, Miss Rose gave them a succession of short sentences. Leaning back in her chair with the expression most of them had worn before they began this enlivening lesson, she fanned herself languidly and nearly closed her eyes. Translated, this read, "O dear! How hot it is!" Then, folding her arms tightly and shiver-

ing with rattling teeth, they gave "What a fearfully cold day!" though Sam, who seemed to be smitten by a sudden dreadful recollection, insisted that it was "Oh! I'm so afraid he'll lick me!"

Glancing through the open window, she caught sight of something in the sky which made her close the window quickly and strike a sharp call for attention on the bell. Then followed quickly the signals for wraps and dismissal. This was understood without any trouble, for they had all been through that process many times. "Storm is coming. Hurry home," was the unanimous version.

The boys looked on in deep perplexity while she sat with scowling face, picking at the edge of her apron with a pin; but the girls looked sympathetically at each other as they wrote, "All this long seam to pull out!" But it was their turn to finger idle pencils while the boys translated some vigorous motions into "Whoa, Billy! Come and get your bridle on."

And so the fun continued until the half-hour was up, and Miss Rose said, smilingly, but earnestly, "And now we must get that spelling lesson, as Sam told us to."

The refreshed children turned readily to their task; but that was only the first of their many "Action Readings," and after awhile Miss Rose let them try the acting part themselves.

INFRINGING ON THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS.

A WEALTHY tobacconist sat in his office with a big ledger open before him, when a clerk opened the door and announced that some ladies wished to see him. "Very well, show them in," he replied, and in a few minutes the dingy office was lit up by a vision of three handsome and elegant ladies, dressed in the latest mode, and carrying about them an unmistakable air of fashion and "haut ton."

One of them, a lady well known as a leader in fashionable circles, was the spokeswoman of the party. "Mr. Tate," said she, "we have come to ask you for a contract."

"A contract?" replied he, with a puzzled smile. "I don't see what kind of a contract ladies would want in my line of business."

"A contract to make a lot of those little tobacco bags you put smoking tobacco in."

"Are you in earnest?" he asked.

"Yes, indeed, we are." We want to buy a new organ for our church, and we wish to get this contract to help us raise money for it."

Of course, Mr. Tate could not refuse the fair petitioners, so before they left his office he had given them a large job, and they cajoled him into giving them more liberal terms than he was in the habit of giving to working women.

The day was not out before another interview with a woman took place in his office; but what a contrast this woman afforded to the showy-looking and prosperous ones who had waited on Mr. Tate that morning! In thin, faded garments, and in a threadbare shawl drawn tightly around her to keep out the wintry blast, she made the same application that the three ladies had already made—viz.: for the making of the little tobacco bags.

"I am sorry," said the merchant, who had often given the woman employment before, "but you are too late. I have already engaged to have as many made as I shall want for several months."

The woman turned pale, and an involuntary groan escaped from her lips. That job represented to her food and fuel and clothing for her fatherless children. She almost staggered as she turned to leave the room, she had so confidently counted on getting employment from the merchant. True, he had not promised her this job, but as he had so often employed her before she had come to consider the making of his tobacco bags as tacitly engaged to her. Too late, now, he saw and regretted his mistake and promised her the making of the next lot; but, alas! it would be a hard struggle for her to tide over the interval that would elapse before he needed another lot. He inwardly vowed, when he saw how distressed and disappointed she was, that he would never again give work to fine ladies who stood in no need of it, but merely sought it for a novelty or a diversion, or to spare themselves from giving out of their pocket-money to church or benevolent purposes.

The three charitable (?) ladies above described, deciding that it would be dull and lonesome to work on the tobacco bags

quietly at home, gave each in succession an elegant luncheon party, to which all the ladies of the congregation were invited for the purpose of working on the bags and thus they made a frolic, or, rather, a series of frolics, of the job, the laborers being refreshed by oysters, ice-cream, Malaga grapes, and various other delicacies, the cost of which would have contributed largely toward buying the church organ.

We may have seemed to speak harshly of these ladies, but such was not our intention. We acquit them of any intention of infringing on the claims of others in the course they pursued. They would doubtless have been shocked if they had discovered that such was the case. It was an error of judgment, arising from a want of thought, that caused them to take bread from the widow and orphan whilst they imagined that they were working in the cause of religion.

The greatest charity we can bestow on the working class is to give them employment at just or liberal prices, and we ought also to show them the negative charity of not interfering with their work.

Let us suppose the case of a man amply well off enough to put out his wife's sewing, and wishing to do so in order to give her more time for culture, flower raising, and other active pursuits. He gives her a sum sufficient to exempt her from sewing and to largely contribute toward the support of some poor seamstress, but his wife, because she wishes to buy additional trinkets or some other mere superfluity, delves over the sewing herself, and diverts from the seamstress the fund intended to compensate her for her work. Would not this be an infringement on the law of charity?

Let us strive not only to do everything in our power to benefit the poor, but to refrain from all that will injure them. Peculiarly great blessings are promised to those who consider the poor. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. * * * The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." Psa. xli, 1-3.

M. W. EARLY.

COUNTRY REMEDIES.

IT is very desirable for every mother of a family to keep on hand a stock of simple remedies, especially if she be living in the country where she is not in easy access of a physician or an apothecary. It is not advisable, nor even safe, for any one but a competent physician to keep and administer opiates and other strong medicines, but there ought to be in every household a store of simple remedies for cuts, bruises, burns, chaps, colds, etc.

Nature spreads in the country an ample store of remedies for all who know how to avail themselves of her bounty or choose to do so; for instance, nearly every herb has some valuable medicinal quality; there is tansy, which, with its wholesome bitterness, makes a good tonic; horehound, which is useful for colds; catnip, renowned for its power to relieve colicky babies; mint, which is beneficial for stomach disorders, and sage, with its valuable astringent properties. Nothing makes a better gargle for sore throat than a decoction of sage, and if you will add to this about a tablespoonful of honey, the preparation will be still more efficacious for sore throat. Besides its usefulness for this purpose, sage tea, applied as a wash to the hair, will stop its falling out. Nearly any kind of herb will make a soothing poultice, mixed with meal prepared as for mush. Put the poultice in a bag, and lay it on the swollen or aching part. A poultice made of hops is still more soothing, as there is something about hops that induces drowsiness.

A hop pillow is, for this reason, very desirable for a person suffering with insomnia.

If there is a slippery-elm tree growing anywhere near you, get a bundle of the bark and keep it in your medicine press. There is no more valuable emollient. Take out the white inner lining of the bark, cut it into pieces an inch or two long, put it into water, and it will soon form a mucilage extremely soothing to an inflamed throat or stomach. I have heard a skillful physician say that there was no occasion to buy gum arabic when you were in access of a slippery-elm tree, as the bark of that tree will make a more valuable mucilage than gum arabic. It is very good for teething babies, and also

very beneficial applied as a wash to inflamed eyes.

The pine tree is full of healing properties. Besides the spirits of turpentine and oil of tar manufactured from it, the free turpentine in its primitive state has great healing virtues. I have many a time seen a country boy bind a lump of it on a sore toe or finger, and he would experience relief in a few hours, or certainly by the next day. Old women in the country quite often make light-wood tea for their colds, and profess to be benefited by the decoction. Mullen tea is also very good for colds.

Kerosene oil, of which there is a supply in every country household, has great remedial properties. Not only does it give great relief when rubbed on a rheumatic limb, but it makes a valuable dressing for a burn mixed with flour and made into a paste. After applying it, bandage the burn so as to thoroughly exclude the air, which is, after all, the most important point in the treatment of a burn. I have seen a child entirely relieved by the application of flour and kerosene oil to a badly burned hand and wrist, which had caused her to scream with pain.

No simple home remedy is more valuable than mutton suet, and no woman who is the mother of small children should allow herself to be without it one hour. It is of the greatest service in cases of cold, rubbed on the breast and throat and be-

tween the shoulder blades, also on the upper lip. It is well to keep a large flannel rag heavily greased with mutton suet over the breast of a child suffering with cold, and a few drops of spirits of turpentine dropped on the mutton suet will render it more efficacious. A flannel band, with a similar mixture of mutton suet and spirits of turpentine on it, is very good for a sore throat and for the incipient stages of croup; indeed, I have known it to ward off an attack; and this disease in an early stage may also be warded off by a poultice made of an onion chopped up and fried in lard, and then laid over the child's breast. A small roasted onion applied to the ear as hot as it can be borne is also very beneficial in cases of ear-ache. Hot suet, tied up in a little bag or old stocking and applied to the ear, will sometimes give relief.

A decoction of wild cherry bark makes an excellent cough mixture, and the roots of sarsaparilla, which are an indigenous growth in many parts of the country, make a decoction admirable for purifying the blood.

Of course, we cannot prepare these things in the skillful way that professional manufacturers do; still, if we are living in the country, it is well for us to avail ourselves of the remedies nature spreads around us, and we will find that even when prepared in the simplest manner they possess great efficacy.

M. W. EARLY.



BOYS AND GIRLS.

[Through some blunder the third paper of the "Catch-all Sassiety" has been published before the first and second.]

THE "CATCH-ALL SASSIETY;"

OR,

AROUND THE HEARTHSTONE.

THEY looked with almost envious eyes upon their few "city" friends, considering them fortunate young people in having been born and bred in an atmosphere of "life and bustle," frequently wishing that—"something would happen to wake up everybody in the old homestead at 'Meadow Sweet' Farm."

Truth to tell, the hours dragged slowly by to the three young people—Will, Mansel, and Bess Clare—when the winter's storms made them prisoners often for days in their somewhat isolated country home.

"Not quite eight o'clock! It's too early for bed. What will a fellow do to pass away these long evenings? The country is well enough in the summer, but one might as well be an exile as to live here in the winter," grumbled Will Clare, a brown-eyed, slender lad of fourteen, as he dropped upon the hearth a handful of the yellow corn he was shelling and looking sleepily at the tall clock on the mantel, his father, nodding over a set of broken harness, Mansel, stirring together a "breakfast" for the blooded pig that was his special pride, and at Bess and the mother, who were late washing the milk-pans.

"I only wish father would get as lonesome as we are and move to town. Just think of the lectures and nice places Fanny Bowles enjoys. Her father is poor, but she sees a good time. I hate Meadow Sweet Farm, I do," said Bess, spitefully, as she vigorously polished a bright pan.

"Children," said Mrs. Clare, "mother

knows 'all work an' no play makes Jack a dull boy,' an' we're goin' to spend a little of the money we've worked so hard for in brightenin' up things a bit. Mother doesn't know just exactly how to do it, but we want to mix fun and learnin'. I've saved ten dollars that's goin' to buy books and papers for you youngsters."

"O mither! you're a darlin'!" cried Bess, dropping a milkpan and throwing about Mrs. Clare's neck two strong, young arms.

"That's just what she is," chorussed Will and Mansel, and then they all fell to planning how to spend the precious ten dollars for their mutual good.

"We must have," voted the trio of young people, "the *Youths' Companion*, *Golden Days*, an agricultural paper, a scroll saw, and a set of carving tools."

"I don't think that ten dollars will pay for such a list of wants, but you shall have them all; you have helped me durin' the harvestin', now I'll help along the mutual improvement club," said Farmer Clare, just waking from his doze, in time to fill to the brim the cup of joy three happy young folks were tasting.

For three weeks there were a continued series of joyful surprises in the household at Meadow Sweet Farm.

First came the big bundle of papers, several back numbers, and then the scroll saw, with a package of prepared woods—white holly, bird's-eye maple, black walnut, ash, and a little rosewood—ranging from one-fourth to three-quarter inches in thickness, numerous patterns for side and corner brackets, wall pockets, work baskets, glove and handkerchief boxes, cabinets, and ornamental stands.

A room was spared and made into a "work shop." With Farmer Clare's help a work bench was soon put together, which

was soon strewn with nails and screws and hinges, plain ones, as well as the tiny ornamental brass ones, planes, saws, and hammers of various sizes, with the paste pot, Japan and copal varnish, with various dyes.

"Purty fair. You like it, don't you, youngsters?" asked Farmer Clare, one evening in midwinter, when the wind swept over the prairie, driving before its unrestrained fury masses of the dry tumble weed and snow, and all was dark and cold around the homestead, as he looked into the "young folks' room," where Bess sat reading aloud, Mansel was busy ebonizing an elaborate octagon-shaped workbasket intended for Mrs. Clare, and Will carefully marked out a design for a "cabinet" bracket.

"Like it! yes, indeed. We can scarcely wait for rainy days and the evenings to come," chorussed three voices, and three bright, happy faces looked quite unlike the discontented ones, of the past, when the "long evenings" were interminable.

"Mother's plan was a purty good one. I didn't think much of it, and the money spent on ye would have bought several fat shotes. But it's all right if you'll not get into mischief," and Farmer Clare fondly stroked the brown curls which adorned the head of "Queen Bess."

"Father," said Bess, soberly, "Will thinks that we ought to make pretty articles to sell. Mrs. Cope was here-to-day, and liked our work so well that she has ordered a pair of knife trays, and jewel boxes of white holly, and I'm to line them with blue satin. She will pay six dollars for them. We mean to make them worth the money. See, the pattern is a wreath of oak leaves, and in the centre a bunch of acorns. Will designed it. I think his patterns are prettier than those we buy. Mansel puts the boxes together, and you've no idea how *very* careful he has to handle them, as wood, after it's seasoned, does split so easily. My part is to polish them nicely with sandpaper, and then shellac them well. For white holly, chestnut, and oak we use white shellac dissolved in alcohol; it's nice for the holly, as that *will* lose its whiteness. Then I line them with bright-colored satin.

"Father, we thought, we thought—"

"Thought what, Bess?" replied her ather, encouragingly.

"We thought that we might get money enough to have a library and let all the neighbors have the use of it. You see, there are so few here who can afford to have things, and it's so far to school the children can't go often when the weather's bad. Mansel thought that we might help them and ourselves too. It's just dreadful to think of Sally Lyons and Tim Marks, nearly men and women, not being able to write their own names or to read, and they use vulgar, bad language. Say, father, do you care if we try to earn the library?"

Samuel Clare stooped and kissed the flushed face, and Bess knew that her cause was won; then, leaving the room hastily, went to find his wife, to tell her that "the youngsters had got ahead of him. As he'd worked long years to benefit Samuel Clare and family, they wanted the whole community, Tom, Dick, and Harry, to share in the good they enjoyed. They take that after you, mother." And Mrs. Clare answered:

"I guess they warn't asleep when you were tryin' to help poor Bill Bangs to regain his lost manhood, an' those papers an' that saw were goin' ter be the means of doin' more'n one person good."

ELLA GUERNSEY.

ANOTHER LETTER TO THE BOYS.

MY DEAR LADS: One year older, one year wiser, and an inch or two taller since Cousin Hester met you all in the cozy corner of the Home Circle. She is glad to welcome every one, and it pleases her to see the frank, manly way in which you come forward to clasp her hand and give her a friendly greeting. There is one rosy-cheeked Charlie in particular, who advances quietly with the others, and Cousin Hester thoroughly appreciates the little effort. She sees that he has indeed accomplished a good year's work. She remembers a confidential chat she had with him last season after the rest of the Home Circle boys had gone, when he unburdened his boyish heart. His great bugbear was an almost unconquerable diffidence. He shrank into corners, ran away from newcomers, started and answered in frightened monosyllables when addressed. "Why, Cousin Hester, when

I go into a room full of people everything spins round; I tumble over my own feet, and my hands are right in my way, for mother says at my age they mustn't go in my pockets under any circumstances. I just keep out of the way when there's company round, I can tell you. What can a fellow do?" and the brown eyes scanned my own anxiously. We talked the matter over long and frankly. We decided that it would be a sad drawback for a man to be thus afflicted, and as Charlie was drifting into the teens he must make ready to be a man. We concluded, too, on considering the subject carefully, that the attention of very few people would be centred on one particular boy, especially if he carried himself easily and naturally, and, therefore, he would really escape observation by cultivating a composed manner.

Clearly, there was but one thing to do, and Charlie did it. He acknowledges that it required a great effort—that it took weeks of patience to suppress the wild light in his eyes and swallow the lump in his throat when addressed unexpectedly by strangers, but he conquered at last. To-day he can enter a room easily, greet the guests modestly, place a chair for his mother, and excuse any little accident by a "beg pardon" without change of color. Then Harry, who was an adept in the usages of polite society, confided to me that he could not face an audience. At school he never declaimed unless fairly driven by his teachers, and then his choked voice, pale, drawn face, and trembling gestures excited their sympathy to such a degree they were fain to excuse him. Well, Harry, and I looked forward a few years. We imagined that he had arrived at man's estate, and was interested, as every man should be, in the welfare of his country, his State, his native town. An important measure is to be discussed in public meeting. Harry has well-grounded opinions and careful judgment concerning it. But he cannot face an audience. Oh! no; he must find somebody to speak for him. The argument loses force and weight from this second-hand repeating—something is lost which might have proved a powerful influence on the right side. Harry's blue eyes deepened and darkened. "I will overcome it," he murmured, between his set teeth. To show

that he has succeeded, I will only say that a month since I heard him declaim, "Forward, the Light Brigade," to a crowded audience in the school building, in a spirited manner that did my heart good. Oh! the Home Circle boys are persevering! Now, to digress a few moments, where do you suppose Cousin Hester has been this afternoon—Cousin Hester, with her fifty years and her gray hair? Don't shout—actually coasting across the meadow on a double-runner! It was too enticing, the ice one smooth glare, and such a beauty of a sled, with two brave lads to steer! Cousin Hester was walking primly along, but, somehow, when they gayly invited her to join them, the spirit of her girlhood took full possession of her, and without a second thought she folded her ulster about her and away she sped, gray curls bobbing and blue glasses askew. But it was grand! And although two ladies from the village drove past at just that moment and looked in mild surprise, she didn't mind much. At any rate, the memory of that coast makes her feel ten years younger to-night.

There was another subject that I want to talk about, and that is books. I wonder sometimes if you always choose the best. No, I do not mean that you must select goody-goody books, with nice pattern youths so exasperatingly perfect that they are hopeless models for the natural boy. I glanced over Ned's *Adventures of a Wild Pirate* the other evening, and oh! such hair-breadth escapes, such wholesale slaughter, and such language, quite unfit to be spoken in the presence of respectable boys, and therefore unfit to read.

"But, Cousin Hester," said the lad, honestly, "it makes my hair stand on end, and I like it!"

My boys, cultivate a different taste. There are so many beautiful and wonderful things all about you to learn, so many noble lives whose history you will find thrilling and inspiring when written, as so many are at the present day, in a style suited to boyish comprehension. Yes, and there are story-books, too, full of fun and frolic and adventure, but with clean pages unsullied by slang or profanity. I can think of a dozen this minute. I do dislike to repeat annoying things, but I must tell you this. Dr. R. had a party of college chums at his house last fall, and his sons,

Oscar and Benny, listened, delighted, to their lively stories and reminiscences of college life. But, sad to say, the boys thought it would be fine to imitate the students' wild pranks in a small way, and since then many misdemeanors have been traced to them. Widow Brown's pet cat came home with the end of her tail cut off, Fred Barnes found the fur collar torn from his new overcoat at the last sociable, the tongue mysteriously disappeared from the town-house bell, the lamps were put out on the main street one dark night. It is such a pity to regard secret mischief as smart and manly. I can assure you it is well for a boy to command respect and deservedly bear a good name among his elders. I am so glad Oscar and Benny are not Home Circle boys! What, every one going? 'Is the evening over so soon? Once more, good-bye, my lads, and God bless you.

COUSIN HESTER.

MARJORY'S DOLL.

A STORY OF FAIRYLAND FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

THERE was once a little girl who lived with her old grandfather at the edge of a forest. The grandfather was a wood-cutter, and every day he went into the forest to cut down trees, and left the little girl to take care of the house. Little Marjory (for that was her name) had not so many toys to play with as the children of rich people have, but she had one wooden doll which her grandfather had once brought her home from the fair, and of this doll she was very fond. She had given it the name of Helen, and when my story begins she had possessed it for nearly three months, which is quite time enough to find out all the good and bad which there may be in a doll. Marjory's favorite play was to take Helen out into the forest. She might not go very far, because her grandfather had told her that there were wolves and bears in the forest, and she might easily meet with some misfortune if she wandered a long way from home. But there was a little stream which ran past the cottage, only about a hundred yards off, and it flowed on into the forest afterward, turning and twisting about, and gurgling and rippling in its course, just for all the world as if it was talking to itself, or perhaps telling the forest trees of all the strange places it had been to, and all the

wonderful things it had seen in the world beyond. It was to this stream that little Marjory loved to go, with Helen in her arms. One day the little girl had gone out as usual after her morning's work was done, and had found a very cozy seat at the foot of a large beech tree, whose roots reached down to the very edge of the little stream. Down she sat, and taking Helen on her knee, began to tell her the prettiest story she could think of at the moment. "See," she said to the doll (who sat quite still and never said a word, for it was not the habit of dolls in that country to speak), "see how quickly the water is flowing along, and how cheerful its language as it flows! Do you see that little branch of oak which it is carrying with it, tossing it to and fro as if it were a plaything? Look how it dances about from side to side, that little branch, as if it was glad to get away from the tree on which it grew, and to see a little of the world. And look again! just after the oak branch comes a tuft of grass which has somehow or other fallen into the stream, and close behind the tuft of grass comes a—Why, what ever is this?" Little Marjory stopped short in her speech to the doll, for she saw something coming which surprised her so much that she did not know how to go on. There was a cocoa-nut shell, only it was three times the size of any cocoa-nut shell that anybody has ever seen at dessert or in the shops, and it was shaped in the shape of a boat, and came sailing down the stream as if it had been used to do so all its life. Perhaps it had, but that was not the most extraordinary thing about it. In the boat, standing upright and seeming to enjoy the sail as much as if she had been a born sailor, was a little lady, not a bit bigger than Helen herself, only she was of a different appearance, and wore a very different dress from the doll, who had on a cotton gown and a straw hat, and had no ornaments about her. The little lady who now approached was dressed from head to foot in a dress of white and gold, which sparkled upon her as if it had just come from the smartest ladies' dressmaker that ever was known. On her head she had a crown of silver oakapples, and around her neck was hung a necklace of costly pearls and diamonds, which added greatly to the beauty and magnificence of her appearance.

It is no wonder that little Marjory was struck dumb at the sight of this glorious little figure, and I do not think that she would have found her voice again soon if the new-comer had not spoken first, which she very soon did. By some means which Marjory could not see at the moment, the little lady steered her boat from the middle of the stream to the side, and springing lightly out upon the bank, came and stood opposite to the child and her doll.

"Good morrow, Marjory!" she said, and Marjory was more than ever astonished when she found that the lady knew her name, and she opened her eyes very wide and looked at her with the greatest surprise.

"Ah!" said the lady, "I see that you do not know who I am, and it is not very likely that you would. But I know *you* very well, my child, and I know that you are good and kind, or else I should never have trusted my daughter to your care."

At these words Marjory was more surprised than ever, and opened her eyes still wider than before.

"Yes," continued the lady, "you do not know what I mean, but you soon *will* know. I am the Fairy Corina, and my power is very great. The doll which you call Helen is my daughter, Araminta. By the laws of Fairyland, the daughters of fairies who wish to inherit their mothers' magical power are obliged to assume different forms for a certain time before they can do so; generally they have to become birds or hares or something of that sort, in which case they run great risk of being hurt or killed by stronger animals, and their time of trial is a dreadful time to their poor parents. But I was permitted to arrange matters so that my Araminta should pass part of her time as a doll. She became a doll some few months ago, and has now just completed her time. It was I who arranged that your good grandfather should buy her at the fair, because I knew that you would treat her well and be fond of her. With you I knew she would be safe from dangers, and now that I have come for her I know I shall receive her back safe and sound."

When she had thus spoken, the lady gave a low and peculiar whistle, and waved her hand at the same time. Immediately, to Marjory's great surprise, the doll Helen stretched out her arms and legs, shook herself, and in another instant

stood before her astonished mistress in the form of a real live person, bearing a marked resemblance to the little lady who had thus called her to life. Turning to Marjory, she immediately made her a very low courtesy, and kissed her hand to her without saying a word. The Fairy Corina, however, proceeded to say something more.

"The daughters of fairies," she said, "do not speak after such a change as my child has gone through, until they have been back to Fairyland, and been washed in lavender, rosewater, and ink, which effectually removes from them any earthly habit which they may have contracted. Araminta, however, loves you well, and will not forget your kindness. I must say good-bye to you now, but neither I nor my daughter are ungrateful, and you will lose nothing by your kindness to my child."

With these words the fairy passed her hand twice before Marjory's eyes, and the child immediately fell into a deep sleep. When she awoke, she thought she had been dreaming, and felt all round for Helen, but no Helen was there! She sat up and rubbed her eyes, and then, looking round again, found that instead of Helen there were to be seen close by her side a white cat, a pigeon, and a brown paper parcel. The cat looked up in her face and purred with joy, as if it had known her all its life; the pigeon cooed in a manner peculiarly sweet and affectionate, and although the brown paper parcel could not speak, it was most satisfactory in every way, for when Marjory opened it, she found it contained a workbox, full of useful things, and, in fact, there was scarcely anything which a reasonable girl could want for household purposes which was not to be found in that workbox. Marjory clapped her hands with delight when she saw those beautiful presents which the fairy had left, and only wished she could see her to thank her for them. You may fancy how pleased the old grandfather was when he came home in the evening and Marjory told him all that had happened. You may also fancy how useful the cat, the pigeon, and the workbox proved to be, and if anybody wants to know more about them, he has only got to go and ask the old white owl in the barn, who can tell the whole history of Marjory's life in the forest, and how the Fairy Corina was her firm and true friend all the days of her life.

HOME CIRCLE.

MARTHA'S WEDDING CAKE.

IT was washday, and as my colored washwoman bustled about in the kitchen I could see that she had something on her mind. She would nod her turbaned head meditatively now and then, or, with fat fists resting on either hip, would stand and gaze for a moment abstractedly out of the window. After she had hung out the clothes and emptied her tubs, she came to the sitting-room door.

"I 'spect I can't do youah washin' any moah fur a week or two, Mis' Whelan," she said.

"Well, Martha, you have taken very few resting spells in the time you have washed for me, and I willingly grant you one now," I returned. "But I hope you are not feeling badly in any way."

"No'm. An' it aint no rest spell dat I'se goin' to take, Mis' Whelan," answered Martha. "I'se 'bout to get married."

I dropped a half-dozen stitches from my knitting-needle in the start this news gave me. Now Martha was no young girl likely to take a fancy to any one who should offer her attentions, but a stout, fat, sensible matron of forty. She was a widow and had four children. The idea of her marrying again had never before occurred to me.

"Why, Martha, whom are you intending to marry?" I asked.

"Hit's a genpleman fum a dist'nce wot I'se been cospondin' wid fur a long time," she said. "Hit's kind of bad not to hab a man 'bout de house, and the gahden gate off de hinges 'n' fences down 'n' henhouse done gone to rack. 'Pears like eberyting goes wrong 'les dare's a man 'bout to fix em up a little."

With Martha, as with many another

maid and matron, the opportunity had quickly created the necessity.

Now Martha had a nice little house, and being strong and healthy she managed to support herself and children easily enough. I felt somewhat concerned lest she was going to throw herself away on some worthless idler, who would wish to marry her for the sake of securing a good home.

"Has your intended husband any property, Martha?" I asked.

"Laws no, Mis' Whelan; but he's a mighty nice pusson fur all dat. He's got de bery best of reckymedations fum his preacher, and Mandy Snow says he's de best wood-sawyer in de place."

Martha said this with such a confident air and with such a tossing of her turbaned head that I knew it was useless to utter a word of warning.

"I'se goin' to be married next Wednesday ebenin'," she went on, "and I'se boun' hit sha'n't be no common doin' like de weddin' ob dat stuck up critter, Barbary Green. I'se boun' to hab a more respectabler crowd and a tonier supper. I want you 'n' Miss Fannie to come, and I t'ought I'd ask yo' to bake de weddin' cake. Barbary Green hadn't only foh kinds of cake at her weddin', but I'se boun' I'll hab six."

"Do you want me to bake all the cake, Martha?" I asked, somewhat anxiously, perhaps, after her boast of such an intended variety.

"Laws, no, Mis' Whelan, jest one of dem nice white ones like you made fur Miss Fannie to take to de picnic—only make it bigger and sugar it all ober and put two white candy birds on top like Barbary Green had on hers."

"Perhaps if I double the quantity called for by the recipe it will be about

right, Martha," I said. "That will make a fine, large cake."

"Shuo nuff," returned Martha. "I'll bring de tings ober to-morrow, and I'll be eber 'n' eber so much obleeged to yoh."

I hunted up the recipe for the cake she wanted, sometimes called angels' food, and read it to her so that she would know what to bring, and then she started home, with her black face beaming like a full moon.

The next day Martha came over in good time, bringing all the ingredients for the cake except the eggs.

"Hain't dat boy got heah yet!" she asked; "'pears like hit takes him an awful long time to go to de groc'ry 'n' back. My hens done stopped layin' 'bout a week ago. I nebber see de like. We's gettin' as many as foh 'n' fibe eggs every day, and all to onct dey dropped off and nebber laid anoder one. But Marcus 'Relius he's gone to de stoah wid de basket to git some, an' he ought to be here dis bressed minute."

It was, perhaps, half an hour later when a sound that had been rather distant and indistinct for a time now developed into a regular howl of distress. Martha and I both rushed to the door. There, coming up the walk, was Marcus Aurelius, roaring at the top of his lungs, and with the tears streaming down his little black face. He carried the basket on his arm; but the eggs—certain yellow streaks ornamenting his clothing and the walk leading to the gate told only too surely their fate.

"Yoh obstrepolus niggah!" screamed Martha, "come heah dis minute 'n' lemme break yoh bones! Wot yoh been doin' wi' dem eggs?"

I knew Martha's threats were always more savage than her actions, so I said nothing, but keeping well out of the way of Martha's eye, indulged in a quiet laugh. Little Marcus did look so funny with the egg mixture streaming from the basket down over his clothing and black, bare feet. He had tried to rub it off, too, with his hands, and then in wiping his tears he had streaked his face also. If he had been rolled in egg like a potato croquette he could not have been much stickier.

Martha seized him, and between her shakes he managed finally to tell that he had stopped to play on the way home, and

had either upset or dropped the basket. Only three or four of the eggs remained unbroken.

After a vigorous application of soap and water little Marcus was sent home, and Martha herself took the basket and went to the grocery. When she returned, I set to work at the cake. It came out of the oven in fine style, and when frosted all over to snowy whiteness and then surmounted by two sugar doves, snowwhite also and billing in a most sentimental manner, Martha declared it to be "de mos' splendiferous cake" she ever saw, and "nuff sight nicer dan dat Barbary Green's."

Martha carried the cake home with her, and I fancied my part in the wedding festivities completed. But Fannie insisted on our acceptance of Martha's invitation.

"Martha will be so disappointed," she said, "if we fail to go. Besides, it will be so unique."

So I yielded, and promised if the evening were fine to go with Fannie to witness the ceremony at least.

The next morning immediately after breakfast Martha came in. She looked so solemn—so unlike her usual smiling self—that I knew something had gone wrong.

"It's dat old tomat ob Colonel Stebens made all de trouble," she said at length. "I'm boun' I'll pisen de obstrepolus critter ef de Colonel doan' keep him to home. I put dat cake on de table last night and kivered hit all up wid a towel, and dis mornin' dah's a great hole gnawed into hit 'n' dat cat settin' on de windersill lickin' hits paws."

Now, I had a suspicion that Martha's own untrained urchins might have had as much to do with spoiling the cake as Colonel Stevens's cat, but I did not speak my thoughts, I only asked: "Shall I make you another cake, Martha?"

"I aint goin' to try no moah," she said, disconsolately. "Seems as ef hit's a jedgment agin me fur wantin' to git ahead of my neighbors. Hit's mighty expensive gittin' married. I've wasted moh 'n' foh dozen eggs on dat cake already, and eggs is twenty cents a dozen."

Martha borrowed our teatrays and went home. She evidently felt very sore over the loss of her cake, which she had intended as the chief adornment of her table, and I concluded to make her

another. Again I beat eggs and sifted and mixed, and again the cake emerged from the oven without flaw. Fannie procured from the confectioner's another pair of billing, snowwhite doves, and with these we crowned the snowy structure.

"We won't send it over, we will wait and take it ourselves," said Fannie. "Martha has been so unfortunate so far that no one knows what might happen to that cake before night if it were in her possession."

That evening, a little before seven, for I thought perhaps Martha might want a little help about final arrangements, we went over. But when we reached Martha's little house most of the guests had already assembled. Boards had been placed and chairs ranged against the wall of her little sitting-room for seats, and these were nearly filled by sprucely dressed colored people, both young and old. As we entered the room the gay talking and laughter ceased. The colored minister, who was to perform the ceremony and now occupied the seat of honor in the big wooden rocking-chair, dropped his tone of merry badinage and began a most grave conversation in a solemn monotone with "Brudah Green." Not wishing to be a check upon the high spirits of the company, we quickly escaped to the kitchen. Here we found a long table set loaded with pies, cake, roasted chicken, cold meats, and preserves and pickles of various kinds. Martha was a good cook and had fairly excelled herself this time. Room was made in the centre of the table for our cake, and many were the commendations of the white-aproned coterie hovering about.

"How cute dem little pigeons do look," said one. "'Pears like dey's kissin' each oder. So kind of 'propriate fur a weddin', aint hit?"

Here Martha emerged from the pantry, where she had been dressing. There were but the two rooms and pantry in the house, and on this occasion the beds had been taken into the yard to make room for the company.

At sight of the cake, Martha raised her hands, their cushiony fatness now adorned with a pair of tight-fitting white cotton gloves, with a cry of pleasure.

"Now dat's jest like you, Mis' Whelan," she said. "I felt uz ef my weddin' was 'bout spiled widout dat cake. But

dey's no use fightin' gin prov'dence, I t'ought, and so I gib it up."

Martha's toilet was wonderful to behold. Her dress, bright blue in color, was made with many puffs and flounces and an enormous tournure, and was trimmed with a profusion of cheap white lace. Little bows and streamers of narrow white ribbon were pinned wherever a bow would show to advantage, while clusters of the white lace on her head and beneath her chin enhanced the blackness of her complexion. She carried a fan and lace handkerchief.

"I'se boun' I'd dress as stylish as dat Barbary Green," she whispered in an aside to me.

And I thought that, notwithstanding her submission to Providence, she still cherished the desire to outshine her neighbors, to which she had attributed her various visitations of bad fortune.

Half-past seven was the hour at which the ceremony was to be performed, and promptly at that time Martha and her betrothed entered the little circle which the crowding of the guests against the wall had left in the centre of the room.

The groom could hardly have been called handsome. He was under-sized, scarcely reaching to Martha's shoulder; his features were strongly marked with all the African characteristics of thick lips, wide nostrils, and retreating forehead. Add to this an air of pompous dignity, a great deal of white collar and shirt bosom, enormous white cotton gloves, a suit of black clothes which seemed to have swallowed the short, stumpy figure, and the grotesque picture is complete.

Martha's face was a full moon of embodied happiness. Did not her supper, already prepared, rival anything in that line that had ever been attempted in that part of town? Was not her toilet the envy of all her female friends? And was she not enjoying all the prestige to be obtained from marrying a "gempleman fum a dist'nce," who bore the high sounding name of George Washington Montgomery? What more could be added to her cup of happiness?

The ceremony over, the long prayer ended, the congratulations and kissing of the bride with all its attending giggling and "wishing joy" through with, the company were soon seated about the sup-

per table. The bride and groom occupied the places of honor at the head of the long table. The napkins were unfolded, the meats carved, and knives and forks had begun to clatter, when, chancing to look at Martha, I saw that something terrible had occurred. She sat with knife and fork uplifted and motionless, her eyes and mouth open, and an expression of consternation impossible to be described transforming her usually beaming countenance.

What could be the matter? Following the direction of her gaze, my eyes rested on the large wedding cake. Alas! the doves which but an hour before had been the emblem of confiding love, had somehow in that interval lost all semblance to their former proportions. The tails, heads, in fact, every projection that could be nipped off, had disappeared.

A woolly head with white teeth and rolling eyes appearing just then in the sitting-room door, gave Martha a clue to the perpetrator of the outrage. Her rage got the better of her company manners.

"Come heah, you mis'able niggah, and lemme break yoh bones!" she cried. And rising from her seat at the table, she rushed at the boy. Then ensued a race. From the sounds we could tell that they had dashed through the sitting-room and out into the yard. Then, as Martha pressed close upon the prodigal, he turned and made a dash through the house and around the table, judging his safest place near the company, perhaps. Martha was close behind, and as he gained the end of the room she clutched him and administered a slap that brought forth a wail of sorrow. The groom now interposed.

"Dare, dare now, Mis' M'gomery," he said, soothingly, "doan' you 'stress yohself any moah. De cake's to be 'at anyhow, 'n' if Marcus has beginned hit we'll fin'sh hit—he! he!"

Whether it was that her long race had exhausted her wrath, or the sound of her new name had soothed it, Martha consented to be appeased and resumed her place at the table. The little episode was soon forgotten, and amid jests and laughter the meal went on until all were satisfied. Then the cake was cut, the remains of the unfortunate doves distributed among the children, and sundry parcels of the cake laughingly wrapped up by the younger guests to be taken home to dream on.

While the rooms were being cleared for the dancing we came away. But I retained a comical picture in my mind of little Marcus hiding behind his stepfather's chair, his chastisement forgotten in the delight of munching the cold chicken and other goodies slyly passed to him by the good-natured soul.

Notwithstanding the ill-omened fate of her wedding cake, Martha seems to be contented and happy in her new relations, and often says to me when she comes to do my washing.

"Hit's a great convenience to hab a man about de place, Mis' Whelan. Pears like I doan' know how I eber did git along widout someun to take keer ob de chillen and saw de wood."

And though the neighbors do say that George Washington Montgomery is inclined to be indolent, since Martha is contented and happy, I hope I may never again be required to bake her a wedding cake.

M. A. J. K.

RECIPE FOR ANGELS' FOOD.

TAKE the whites of eleven eggs beaten to a stiff froth, a tumblerful and a half of granulated sugar, measured after being well crushed and sifted, a tumblerful of sifted flour, a teaspoonful of cream tartar, and a teaspoonful of lemon or vanilla flavoring.

Mix the cream tartar with the flour and sift four or five times; then stir the sugar slowly into the beaten eggs; stir in the flour and lastly the flavoring.

Wipe out the cake pan, but do not grease; put into a cool oven and heat gradually; when done, leave in pan until cold; frost if desired. This cake is considered *very* good.

DAN'EL DUDGEON'S SECOND WIFE.

"**S**O Uncle Dan is going to marry the old widder Bacon after all," said Captain Riggs, as he took off his hat and coat and drew near the fire, where his wife had placed the creaking splint-bottomed chair that he always sat in.

"You don't say, father!" was the surprised answer. "Why, it don't seem mor'n yesterday that Dan'el and Kizzy celebrated their golden wedding. 'Pears

to me he might 'a' waited a spell, if only for the sake of the dead-and-gone woman who lived with him as wife more than half a hundred years."

"I guess Dan got enamored with his housekeeper," was the slow reply. "You see, he was lonely—all broke up, as you may say—and the widder knew how to make things cheerin' about his house. He told me he never saw a woman who could roast beef and make beef gravy and corn muffins equal to her. Then she had a knack o' being sort of agreeable, putting in the long evenings telling stories and relating things that made the time pass cheerful. When her month was up he wouldn't hear of her going back to town again. He just up and proposed matrimony. She shied off, after the fashion of a girl a spell, but it was just what she expected. They are to be married at Colwell's to-morrow evening."

"I do say!" said the Captain's wife, as she poured out the tea and set it carefully beside him. "How true that saying is, that 'there is no fool like an old fool.'"

And then they went on talking pleasantly as the flow of a little rill of the times of long ago, when young Dan Dudgeon courted and married Kezia Peabody, how they managed and planned on the old worn-out Peabody farm, how well she did her part, how Dan'el never went to the Centre or the city but his wife had some kind of produce for him to carry along to pay for the groceries or the calico for baby's dress or herself an apron or for a few pounds of nails; how cheerful she was; what an early riser; how she economized time and opportunity, and how she raised calves and chickens and turkeys, and, as the Captain said, made both ends meet.

So the "enamored" old man married the widow Bacon. It was not long until the home in the country became lonesome. She did not like to have his comrades call and spend rainy days or evenings. The old treat of cider and apples grew stale, and the long, laughable stories of old times that the neighbors indulged in when they called to see Uncle Dan'el grew very insipid indeed.

She wanted to move to town. Her own house had three vacant rooms unoccupied, and finally she persuaded her new husband to change his abode.

All the old neighbors came with teams,

and the moving day was a frolic for those who had no interest save to see the going "out of the old house into the new."

Danny felt sorrowful enough when the old home was stripped of the familiar things that he had known nearly all the years of his married life. Every object had a story twined about it; every doorway tree was a book or a poem or a history.

When no one saw him he looked from the attic window and wept.

When the last wagon was creaking with a funereal sound, quite like a shriek over the beloved dead, as its wheels crunched slowly on the graveled hillside, Danny, poor, old, trembling culprit, leaned his cheek against the old elm in the rear of the house and groaned.

What had he done? For a moment he could have choked the wily widow Bacon, now his wedded wife, the woman in waves and crimps and tulle neckwear and hoop ear-rings, the concoctor of delicious gravies and puffy muffins, on whom he had settled the bulk of his property.

It is a long story and a pitiful one of how he tried to be "like town folks," as he expressed it, and how he failed in every thing.

When the Bacon woman tore and cut up his farmer clothes into rugs and carpet rags, and laid out white shirts, white cuffs, and handkerchief, with his quarterly meeting clothes, telling him he must wear them every day, Danny fairly rebelled with anger. His pipe and tobacco pouch and soft hat with lopping rim, and wide, flapping slippers, were all gone on one fateful morning. In his utter sorrow, not knowing what else to do, he went back to bed and lay there, with his weak, watery eyes winking at the white-washed wall, and wishing that he had never, never left Pine Orchard for her home in town.

And he thought of the patient, loving wife, dead not quite two years, of her sweet smile, and of the gracious manner with which she coincided with everything he said.

While he lay there remorseful, regretful, looking back over the pictures of the past, the slow, measured tones of the widow whom he had married said: "You had better get up, Dan'el Dudgeon; no use in flying into the face of Providence." He swallowed the sob that choked him. He

rose, he ate the breakfast that waited for him, he walked out. The fresh morning air revived him. He sat on a log beside Hineman's brook, and he made up his mind to bear with all that came to him. He had brought it on himself. Yes, he would walk in the path he had marked out. It would not be long. But his trials were not over.

When his old neighbors unloaded his household goods, old relics, many of them seventy years old, only a few pieces of furniture were permitted to go into her house. The beautiful chamber set, a present on the golden wedding day, was admitted into one of the rooms. Nearly all the rest were stored in the barn—a good, new, but small barn on the back of the lot where the house stood.

And when the memories of other years lay heavy on his mind, Dan'el would sit for hours in the barn in his rocking-chair in the sunshine, with the great doors wide open—sit and muse or sit and visit with neighbors who came in from the country. On conditions that he would never chew or smoke outside of the barn, he was granted his pipe and tobacco. And there he sat among his old familiar goods and furniture and books, sometimes dozing and sometimes dreaming without sleep. During the long summer he was quite happy. He ate his meals regularly with the family, his wife and her married sons. He was never abused—he was borne with, tolerated. His money and notes had been helpful to them, and at his death the widow would be remembered by the laws of the State.

But Danny Dudgeon never "took on town ways," as he termed it. When he went to church or town meetings, he always walked in the middle of the street. If Bacon expostulated, he would say: "No danger, then, of runnin' agin folks; let them take the pavement, I'll take the highway." If Bacon said in anger, "Mr. Dudgeon, nobody ever eats with the knife any more who has any manners," he would say, "I was allus used to eatin' with a knife; people can do as they please about it." If she reprimanded him for saying "idear" and "Marier" and "Washin'ton," he was pretty apt to make a reply that did not mend the imperfect orthography. One day he sat in the barn reading over some letters

that his first wife had written to him more than half a century ago, when she had gone on a visit with her baby into another State. The old, dim letters were precious to him. While he sat there the new wife came sailing out dressed for a walk, and hailed to him that he must not forget to carry in the canary if she were not at home before sunset. He nodded acquiescence, and then she walked with a perceptible swing of her skirts that showed her fine state of complacency—that she was satisfied with Mrs. Bacon Dudgeon.

The poor old man fixed his dim eyes upon her, and then he found relief in the ejaculation of "the devilish fashions!"

It was hard for one who had known all phases of poverty and privation and patched clothes, to see beauty in the extreme of fashion's demands. Just then old neighbor Captain, whose farm had joined Dan'el's ever since they were entered at the land office, came into the barn. A rickety rocking-chair stood near. He shook hands before he sat down.

"Fixing up your accounts, eh?"

"No, reading some of Kezlar's letters, writ when she was down at Vernon, the fall before Justice died; you mind the time. 'Pears to me she wrote such smart, wise epistles for a woman," was the reply, as the old man looked over his glasses at his neighbor. "Now, *she* couldn't 'a' writ that way to save her life."

And then, somehow, perhaps because they were alone in that dreamy summer afternoon, with the bees buzzing among the sweet pea and poppy blossoms along the path from the house to the barn, everything musical and typical of the late afternoon of life, the two old cronies fell a-talking in confidential mood.

"Might 'a' been as well for you if you'd stayed on the farm instid o' sellin' it, after all, say, Danny?" said the neighbor, leaning over and tapping him on the knee.

"Better, better a thousand times over," was the answer. "Fact is, I'm not Dan Dudgeon any more. I'm not myself. I've been a fool of a man here, at the end of a long, busy, honest life; but between you and me, Captain, I couldn't help it! That woman, Bacon, did make my desolate home so comfortable and cheerful. Her cookin' was amazin'. Her conversation

was like a preacher's. The very smell of the tea and coffee she make up at Pine Orchard was like conjurin'. I wouldn't want it to get out, but when I praised her work one evening, you see, she up and busted out a-cryin' as pitiful as the blatt of a motherless lam'. I didn't know what to make of such a bustin' of tears, and I asked her if she had tuk any offense. Then she told me how long it had been since anybody'd spoke such a kindly way to her, and that she was as lonely as the deer upon the mountain; that she had allus been obliged to work, and that she earned means, goin' out a-nussin', to buy this town property, with what her boys had saved.

"Why, Captain, she leaned clear over in her cryin' fit till her head touched my shoulder! What could I do? Get out o' the way and let her fall? Tell her I was sorry and then go off about my chores? I did what I called the manly part. I didn't think while you could 'a' said 'Jack Robinson.' I began to weep likewise. I told her I was an old stub of a tree, dead all but the pushing over, lonely too; nobody cared for me, and if she would unite her fate to mine, all right, I was willin'. I may have been a little too fast. I think now that I was. I ought to considered and consulted and connived round a little before I concluded to marry again; much less a widder, fond of gay life, with two sons, who are still 'mamma-boys,' hanging on to her. And I was too fast when I sold the old farm, every inch of which I loved as if it was flesh of my flesh. I was beguiled. I can't tell you how I felt with the sobbin' head of the widder reclinin' on my shoulder as if she throwed herself on my pity and protection; as if she had no friend in the wide world to give her any sort of sympathy or love. Yes! I right up and proposed instanter.

"Next mornin' I settled three thousand dollars on her—I did. I vum I never took sober thought about what the consequences might be!

"After that, I had no peace till I came here. At home I could set on the stoop and see the swallers skimmin' over the meaders, and hear the swirl and toss of the water over Drummond's dam, and see the cattle on the hills, and the geese and ducks in the valley on the pond, and I could smoke my pipe and float along

down the stream, as you may say; but that's all over now. I set out here and take such comfort as comes to an old man who has sold himself."

The two old neighbors sat and talked the rest of the afternoon. One was as full of sympathy as the other was of regrets. They girded their sentences with, "I vums," and "Drat its," and finally, when the Captain rose to leave, they shook hands long and sadly over the sentences—"None of us is so wise but he may be caught with chaff;" and, "Well, well, a man's never too old to larn."

When the winter winds came they drove Dan'el out of his snug corner in the barn. He could not quit the habit of his youth, smoking. He was lost without his pipe. He tried to stand out on the sunny-side of the wood-house and enjoy his smoke, but the wrathful winds whizzed round the corners and made him shrink up into a very weazen old man, with a temper far from amiable.

Then the summer-time lean-to had a stove put into it, and he crouched down beside it in the very chair in which his blooming young wife, Kizzy, sat when she nursed the one sweet baby that came to them for a little while. That comforted him. Had not the same arms of the wide, low chair held her that held him then? Did not the same rockers creak to and fro for him as they did for her? It was a little grain of comfort for a hungry heart to feed upon.

And while he gleaned all the satisfaction possible from these vague, unmeaning things, he seemed for hear her voice, and he closed his eyes in reverie and rejoiced that his poor heart was stored with such sweet memories. Then his thoughts would go back to the evil hour in which he fell a willing victim to the wiles of the smiling widow. How pleasant she made the evenings at the old farm at Pine Orchard! How pitiful her cry when she leaned over upon his shoulder! How she blushed when he proposed marriage! How she kissed the hand that settled upon her the hard earnings of the united twin lives of his own and his Keziah's! How blue her eyes grew when she declared a living on the farm in the secluded country was intolerable! How deftly she had carried out her plans and how complete his final surrender! How had he fallen from his

brave estate into one of servility and humble subjection!

No one was to blame but himself. He would assert his rights when the summer came. He said he would. And so he dodged in and out, sometimes asleep in his chair, enjoying his pipe out-doors, keeping out of the way, speaking no bitter word because it was unavailing, humble as any spaniel, trying to forget the past and trying to see light in the time to come.

He grew thin and white. His eyes were luminous. He would search for his glasses when they were on his forehead. He would sit quiet in the stillness of the Sabbath day, when no church-bell pealed forth, because the Sabbath was not come, or was gone.

One early day in spring, when the blue-birds sought the nesting box in the willow tree beside the wicket gate, the old man feebly crept out to his treasures in the barn. That was the nearest to any home he had on earth. He opened wide the doors, and the blessed long-coming sunlight streamed in, in broad bars as yellow as gold. He drew his chair into its soothing presence and opened a tiny box in which he kept the little keepsakes of his dead wife's, her picture, a piece of her wedding dress and of her shroud, and a long, silky tress of her silver white hair. He opened her hymn-book, and he looked at her old Bible, with the thin, well-worn clasps. He spread them out on his knees. A keen sense of his desolation came over him and he cried aloud. His old frame shook and swayed like the familiar pines in a storm, as he had often looked upon them on the beautiful knoll below his country home. He looked up. He called the name of the dear one who had walked beside him, his wife, for more than half a hundred years.

When Samson, sorrowing, prayed that the gates of Gaza might yield, his petition was answered. God answers fervent supplication.

When the shades of evening came down upon the village, and they looked for the old man, they found him sitting with his

treasures spread out in his lap, his head bent forward as if in slumber.

The gates of the Eternal City had opened wide, and in the glorious light of the new birth of immortality, the poor old man, disappointed, had entered in and rest had come to him.

ROSELLA RICE.

ROBIN'S PUZZLE.

WITH the earliest shining of summer
suns

And the frailest of leaves that start,
Slowly and surely my little one
Is building her nest in my heart.

Like the beautiful shimmer of April
showers,
Her smiles are akin to tears;
A nameless grace, like the scent of flowers,
Belongs to her innocent years.

In the daintiest way, lo! she weaves and
weaves
Her home in my rough old heart;
See how it pulses and beats and heaves,
Bewitched by her delicate art!

Yet daily I puzzle how this should be,
Or why she should grace me so;
And why Thou art sending such bliss to
me,
O God! am I ever to know?

The love of the Lord, which they tell and
preach,
Does it come in the same still way?
Shining and gliding within my reach
With the warmth and the glimmer of
May?

I am learning the spring-time thought of
Thee,
For the tides of the soul must swell
Ere the hard old trunk of the gnarled
tree
Will do its white blossoming well!

CAROLINE D. SWAN.





BABYLAND.

GRANDPA'S APRIL DAY.

SHE'S the sweetest thing in the wide,
wide world,
With the bluest eyes and the sunniest
hair;

She papa's darling and mamma's pet,
And grandma's own little Clare.

And though she may cry o'er a broken
doll,

Or a finger injured in play,
Before you know it she dimples and smiles,
And brushes the tears away.

So that papa's darling and mamma's pet,
Uncle Willie's breath o' the May,
Dear, patient grandma's own little Clare,
Is grandpa's April day.

KATHARINE HULL.

SOMETHING ABOUT ROBBIE.

ROBBBIE came down to breakfast in a
very bad humor. He was a delicate
little boy, and so people didn't mind so
much if he were a little cross, but this
morning he was very cross indeed. He
had some fried potatoes on his plate when
he passed it up to grandpa for a piece of
beefsteak. He watched grandpa very
closely as he put the meat on his plate,
and before the dear old gentleman had
time to help him to gravy the little boy
cried out:

"Grandpa! I want some gravy, but
don't let it touch my potatoes!"

So grandpa, who, mamma says, spoils her
boy, was very particular in pouring the
gravy right over the meat. But we all
know that beefsteak gravy will not stay
in one place, and Robbie saw a little
stream approaching his potatoes.

"Oh! it's goin' to touch!" he screamed.
"Now it's touchin'," and he stuck his lips

out very far, and put a determined little
fist on each side of his plate and wouldn't
eat his breakfast.

"Robbie is a naughty boy," said
mamma; "I will have to call Mary to
take him away."

"Eat your breakfast like a good boy,"
said grandpa, soothingly.

"I think Robbie got out the wrong side
the bed this morning," said Aunt Sue,
looking across at her stubborn little
nephew.

At this Robbie opened his blue eyes
very wide, and forgot all about his cooling
breakfast. "Why," he said, very ear-
nestly, "I got out the same side grandpa
did."

And every one laughed, so that his good
humor was completely restored and Mary
didn't have to be called.

COUNTING.

WHAT! you can count? I don't
believe it,
Such a tiny bit of a boy,
With the sunbeams caught in your yellow
locks,

And eyes agleam with joy.
But it's really true? you did it last night
When mother had gone away,
You lay in your little bed up-stairs
And counted the stars, you say?

You'd like to prove it? Well, let us look—

The waves run on too fast,
And the little boats, with their single sails,
In an instant flutter past.

There's something you'd count, you surely
would,

If such a thing might be,
That all the fishes would lift their heads
Out of the silver sea.

R.

TEMPERANCE.

A MISTAKE.

IT was a large, old-fashioned country house, in the neighborhood of the Eastern Townships, with beautiful maple shade trees overhanging the wide, covered verandas, and forming a protection from the fierce sun of an intensely hot August day in the year—but no; I must not mention the date, for the facts of this sad story are only too true. A little group were here assembled: two ladies, sitting together chatting, and a little apart a gentleman with a newspaper in his hand, but he appeared to be listening more to the conversation than reading, although he was probably not aware of the fact. These were Mr. and Mrs. MacPherson and their daughter, Mrs. Graham, who was on a visit to her parents, and was somewhat of an invalid, having a short time before recovered from a serious illness.

It was Sunday, and they had not long been home from church, the subject of discussion being the merits of the sermon.

Presently Mr. MacPherson aroused himself and spoke:

"Come, mother, is not dinner ready? I am getting hungry."

"Oh! yes," Mrs. MacPherson answered; "we need not wait, only I have been expecting the children every minute; they cannot be long now." She rose and went to the steps to have a better view of the road, shading her eyes with her hand. "They are coming now," she said, resuming her seat when she returned. "It is so very warm for a long walk that I felt a little uneasy about them."

"Is it a new arrangement, having the Sunday-school at this hour?" Mrs. Graham asked.

"Yes; since Mr. Stone came the time has been altered, and we like it better, for

now we can all go together. It was rather too far to walk both ways."

Mrs. Graham looked at her father and laughed a little. "It is the old story, I suppose, with mother; she is always spoiling her children."

"Just the same as ever. Isabel and Rob are almost as bad as you, Katie," Mr. MacPherson answered, with a twinkle of amusement in his eye at having turned the joke on his daughter. "It is of no use for me to try to train them. But there they are!" as a boy and a girl came up the avenue.

"How Isabel grows!" Mrs. Graham said, watching her sister, who was somewhat in advance—a pretty girl of about fifteen, with a slight, graceful figure and a quantity of fair hair down her back. Although she looked warm, she did not appear to be overcome with the heat, for she came briskly up the steps, saying quickly as she caught sight of the dinner table through the open window, "Oh! you have not had dinner yet! I am so glad you waited for us."

"What makes you so late, Isabel?" her father asked.

"I did not think we were any later than usual, father!" Isabel drew up an unoccupied rocking-chair near to her sister and seated herself, throwing off her hat as she spoke.

"It was not because she did not walk fast enough," Rob said, leaning against the back of his mother's chair and wiping his heated face with his handkerchief.

He was a boy of eleven or twelve, perhaps not as nice looking as his sister, but there was a round, good-natured face, with pleasant brown eyes, and generally a pair of rosy cheeks, but just now they were a little more than rosy; a deep flush dyed

them which was not the glow of health, and his eyes looked dull and heavy.

"How could you walk fast on such a warm day, Isabel?" her mother asked, in a reproving tone.

"I'm sure I did not think we came very fast. Generally Rob leaves me behind. I can't think what ails the child!"

Isabel glanced mischievously at her brother to note the effect of her words.

"You're a child yourself, Isabel!" Rob cried, indignantly, the hot flush deepening on his face in his excitement.

"Hush!" the mother said, quickly; "that will do, Isabel," as she was about to reply; "you are childish if you cannot keep from teasing your brother. And what a great man we have here," she continued, in a lower tone, turning to Rob, "who gets angry at such little things."

The boy made no answer except to stoop and rub his forehead against his mother's shoulder, and when she asked what was the matter he complained that his head ached.

"Come, then, we will have dinner at once, and afterward you can lie down and be quiet for awhile. Isabel, ring the bell, and see if the doctor is in his room."

"Why, mother," Isabel exclaimed, as she moved to obey, "has the doctor never come down yet? he's getting very lazy!"

But as they all went in a young man joined them at the foot of the stairs in a loose morning coat and slippers. He apologized to Mrs. MacPherson, as they gathered round the table, for his appearance on the score of the heat, and inquired of Mrs. Graham how she was feeling, and if they had all been at church.

There was some bantering from Mrs. Graham and Isabel as to how he had spent his morning.

"You were not at church, Dr. Mayne," Isabel cried, "or I should have seen you."

"No! I would scarcely have been in time," the Doctor answered, "seeing I have just got up." And then, as she opened her eyes in astonishment, he explained that he had been called up in the night to attend a sick child.

"Anything new?" Mr. MacPherson asked; "I did not hear you go out."

"Kingston's little girl had an attack of croup—a serious case—but I think she will be all right now."

VOL. LVII.—28.

"She has always been subject to those attacks," Mrs. MacPherson remarked, in her quiet way, as she poured out the tea. "I thought she was outgrowing them; it is some time since she had one."

"She is allowed to run and overheat herself, and then to put her feet in cold water by way of a change. It is a wonder she ever lived through it!" The Doctor spoke in a disgusted tone, as though he would protest against mothers having the care of children who could not look after them properly. Nevertheless, he began to eat his dinner with great relish, as a man would who had had no breakfast.

After awhile his eye fell on Rob, who was eating nothing.

"What's wrong with you, my man?" regarding him steadily; "the heat has been too much for you, I think."

Rob smiled faintly at the Doctor and murmured something about not being hungry, which was so unusual an occurrence that it drew forth various comments from one and another.

"What is the matter, my son?" his father asked. "Are you sick?"

The boy again complained that his head ached, and his mother suggested that he go and lie down on the sofa if he did not want any dinner.

He did so, and the talk went on as well as the dinner.

Mrs. Graham, whose home was in the Southern States, was describing the quantities of fruit which she was always able to obtain. She had been endeavoring to prevail on her parents to visit her in her distant home.

"Indeed, Katie," Mrs. MacPherson said, "I do not like the States at all. Such dreadful accounts of murders and accidents as we are continually seeing in the papers you send us. It fairly makes me nervous to read them."

"O mother! as if such things did not happen in Canada as well!"

Both her father and the Doctor laughed heartily, and the latter said, taking Mrs. MacPherson's part, "Of course not. Did you ever hear of our having a storm to compare with the cyclone you were describing to us only yesterday?"

"And the snakes and reptiles you tell about!" from Mr. MacPherson.

"Yes, and then the heat, Katie," Isabel put in, joining the conversation more for

the sake of argument than out of love for her country. "I'm sure it's warm enough here to satisfy any one."

"Not to mention the fevers," Dr. Mayne went on, humorously.

"You see, Katie, I'm afraid I could not induce your mother to go," Mr. MacPherson said, and Mrs. Graham answered, hastily—

"Ah! I should not have told you so many stories before you had been there. You are looking at the matter all from one side. And as to the States, mother, I am sure, if you were once to live there, you would not wish to return here."

"Do you think we could ever settle anywhere else after living here so long, Katie?" Mrs. MacPherson spoke a little reproachfully. "I daresay, my dear, we should enjoy seeing your home very much, but it is rather too far for us to go. You will have to try and come to us as often as you can instead."

Shortly after the two men fell into a discussion about other matters, which lasted till dinner was over.

"Well," Mr. MacPherson said, as they arose from the table, "I will go down and see how old blind Ben is getting on. He always expects me to read to him on a Sunday. Are you going out, Doctor?"

"Oh! yes, after a little, when it gets cooler."

"I wish you'd just take a look at the boy there before you go and see what is wrong. It's not often he complains."

He took his hat and departed, and presently the Doctor went into the sitting-room, where Rob was.

"Why, my boy, are you no better?" he said. "Come, sit up, and let me see where the trouble lies."

Dr. Mayne talked as he made his examinations, and succeeded in making Rob laugh a little by reminding him that this was the first time he had condescended to require medical assistance from him. They were very good friends, these two. The Doctor frequently assisted the boy with his studies, and Rob as often saved his steps by acting as an errand-boy for him.

"A little bilious," was what he told Mrs. MacPherson a moment after. "I will make him up a powder and bring it down, and he will be all right to-morrow. He had better not go out again to-day in the heat," he turned back to add as he

was going up-stairs. Gradually the ladies assembled in the sitting-room, with the books, prepared to spend a quiet time.

Mrs. MacPherson sat on a low easy chair beside her son, and gently pushed back the thick brown hair from his heated brow.

Suddenly the boy looked up and spoke:

"Why don't you read, Katie?"

"I was afraid of disturbing you," Mrs. Graham said, "but, if you like it, we can go on with the book we were at."

Two years before, when Katie MacPherson had married and gone with her husband to her new home, she had been sadly missed by all in her father's house, and now her first visit to her parents was all the more appreciated on this account.

Isabel said it was well Mr. Graham had sense enough to leave Katie there and go away, so that they might have her to themselves for a little while. Perhaps Mrs. Graham did not quite echo these sentiments, which separated her from her husband; but, however this might have been, she appeared to be fully enjoying the return to her old life, and had resumed many of her former habits, among which was the custom of reading aloud on Sunday afternoons.

She had a low, sweet voice, which rendered this a particular treat to her hearers.

Now, as she commenced, silence fell on the little group, and no one noticed how the time passed away. More than an hour must have gone by when Mrs. Graham laid down her book and spoke:

"Did the Doctor not come down yet? I did not hear him. Did you, Isabel?"

"He is up-stairs still. I heard him moving about a moment ago. There! he is coming now!" as steps began to descend the stairs.

He came into the room where they were sitting with a small white paper in his hand, which he gave to Mrs. MacPherson for Rob, with directions for use, at the same time reminding Mrs. Graham that she ought to take her medicine.

He then went out, and shortly after they saw him pacing back and forth among the trees, smoking a cigar.

"Do not get up, mother," Mrs. Graham said, "I will attend to the medicine; I have to get my own." As she spoke she pointed to Rob. He had fallen asleep

while his sister was reading, and she thought how pretty the boyish face looked as he lay sleeping, with his head on one arm and the deep crimson of his cheeks contrasting with the white brow, from which the hair was pushed back, the only spot that had escaped being sunburned.

She mixed the powder, and Mrs. MacPherson aroused Rob and administered it. He took it readily, only asking in a drowsy tone what it was for, and then laid down again. Mrs. Graham resumed her seat and took up her book, but they got into conversation, and going from one subject to another the reading was forgotten. Half an hour had slipped away, and Isabel was just proposing that they should go out on the west veranda, now that the sun had got round to the other side, when suddenly Rob started up, saying, in an odd, choking voice, as though he was suffocating: "A drink!—mother!—quick!—some milk!"

He caught at his mother's arm as if struggling for help, and she supported him and held the glass of milk, which Mrs. Graham was not a second in obtaining, to his lips, but he only tasted it, and then, to their horror, fell back in his mother's arms, apparently lifeless.

"The Doctor!" Mrs. MacPherson shrieked. "Isabel, run—your father!"

Dr. Mayne had finished his cigar, and was sitting reading in an old rustic chair under a tree, when he saw Isabel fly past looking like a ghost.

He called to her, and when she heard him she stopped.

"O Dr. Mayne!" She could scarcely speak, but he made out, "Rob—make haste—he's sick," and then she fled on.

When the Doctor entered the house the poor mother was still holding her boy, and trying to help Mrs. Graham to rub his hands and arms, and bring some sign of life to him.

"What's the matter? Is he worse?" he asked, quickly. Mrs. MacPherson glanced up with a piteous, terrified look on her face, but seemed unable to utter a word, and it was Mrs. Graham who began to explain that Rob had fainted, and implore that he would tell them what to do quickly.

As the Doctor caught sight of the boy's face an expression of consternation broke

from him. Another moment, and he had taken him from his mother, and laid him down on the pillow. Tearing open his clothes, he placed his hand on the boy's heart, his face whitening as he did so.

"What has done this?" he demanded, almost fiercely. "He was all right when I saw him; scarcely anything the matter with him. Did you not give him the powder?"

Mrs. Graham assured him she had done exactly as he had directed, and pointed to the empty paper, which still lay on the table. As his eye fell on it, he suddenly snatched it up and examined it closely, applying it to his nose. A cry of horror burst from him, and he rushed from the room like one distracted.

They could hear him at the top of the stairs before it seemed possible for him to have reached the bottom. He was back almost immediately bringing a small glass of some liquid which he could scarce carry straight, his hand was shaking so much through his excessive agitation. Great drops of perspiration stood out on his colorless face, and he seemed not to know what he was doing as he went up to the sofa and put the glass to Rob's lips, saying wildly: "He must drink this! He will be all right! He's not dead! I won't let him die!" But the poor lips were already set and cold in death, and the Doctor flung away his glass, crying out:

"It is too late!" Then, "I have killed him! May God forgive me for this! I did not mean it!"

Mrs. Graham gave a scream as the truth flashed on her. "What did you do?" she gasped.

"It was the wrong powder I gave you! It is my fault! I have killed him!"

Had Dr. Mayne cared less for the boy he might have taken more thought of what he was saying, and what the consequence of such a confession might be to himself. But he appeared like a man deranged as he went on chafing the boy's cold limbs.

Then the mother for the first time seemed to find voice.

"You have killed my child!" She spoke slowly, as though the words came with difficulty through her stiff lips, and her voice sounded unlike her own. Dr. Mayne never forgot the look on her face

as she spoke. It appeared to bring him to himself. He said in a low voice of misery: "I can say nothing—offer no excuse for what I have done; but if by giving my life I could restore him to you, I would gladly do so."

He waited for her to speak, but she only motioned him away from the sofa toward the door.

"But," Mrs. Graham cried, following him as he went out, "won't you tell us what to do? Oh! can't we do something for him?"

He stared at her for a moment, and then said hoarsely: "You can do nothing! No earthly power can bring him back to life. Do you suppose if anything could be done I would not do it?" He turned and went up to his own apartments.

I must pass over the sad scene which ensued when Isabel returned with her father shortly after. It would be well nigh impossible to describe their grief and horror when they learned all that had occurred.

As soon as the father felt he could trust himself he went up to the Doctor's room. The door was partly open, and he was sitting at the table with his head bowed on his hands.

He looked up as Mr. MacPherson entered, and he appeared even more wretched than before, if, indeed, this could be; for he was realizing to the full what might be the penalty of his fatal mistake.

He did not wait for Mr. MacPherson to speak, but turned to him with a gesture of supplication. "O Mr. MacPherson! pity me! It was a mistake. Have some mercy and do not expose me!"

"Mercy!" Mr. MacPherson said, bitterly. "You can ask me for mercy?"

"I know I deserve none, but is it not enough that I must always bear the burden of this deed about with me? Will you ruin all my future also?"

"As you have ruined the happiness of my family!" Mr. MacPherson answered without showing any sign of being moved by the Doctor's appeal.

"It was a mistake!" the Doctor repeated. "I would give all I possess to undo it."

"And are you in the habit of making mistakes of that nature?" the other inquired sarcastically. "Ah! I see how it is. You have been drinking again!" he

thundered, as he suddenly caught sight of an empty glass and decanter on the table. "You were not in a condition to administer medicine to any one."

The Doctor was silent, only indicating that he heard by a slight shudder, and after a moment Mr. MacPherson continued:

"Is there no hope? Is it too late to do anything for him? If I send for another doctor and have him examined—"

"Oh! no! no!" the wretched man cried, in nervous terror. "I give you my word of honor the greatest skill on earth could avail nothing now. O Mr. MacPherson! can you not trust me sufficiently to believe that were it possible to do anything, I would do it? I loved the boy as you did yourself."

"Trust you!" Mr. MacPherson echoed, contemptuously, but his face softened somewhat at the last words, for he knew them to be true.

There was silence for a few minutes, and the different expressions which passed over the father's face in that short space of time showed how many conflicting thoughts were working within. At last he turned away, saying coldly as he left the room:

"If I am to show you any mercy I must have time. I can feel none for you now."

That night he sent for the Doctor and had a private interview with him.

"I have decided to spare you," he said, "and keep this quiet on two conditions. To prosecute you would do me no good; it could not bring back my child to life. You are to leave this place at once, and never return; and you are to become for the future a temperate man. If I ever hear of you indulging in drink, I shall at once take steps to have you brought to justice."

There is no need to say that Dr. Mayne thankfully agreed to these conditions. He disappeared from the place and has never since been heard of. This sad event happened years ago, but it is none the less true on that account.

I was told the story by Mrs. Graham herself, and she was quite willing that it should be given to the public as a warning, as it is so long since, and the names of the actors in it have been withheld. Mr. and Mrs. MacPherson are now an aged couple, and are still living in their peaceful country

home. Isabel has long been married, but every year she and her sister meet at their old home, and there they often think and

speak of their poor little brother, whose young life was so sadly cut off, a victim to the sin of intemperance.

PAULINE.

NOTES FROM "HOME" HOUSEKEEPERS.

Well-tryed recipes, helpful suggestions, and plain, practical "talks" on subjects of special interest to housekeepers will be welcome for this department, which we have reason to believe most of our readers will find interesting no less than useful. Our "HOME" friends will here have opportunities of assisting each other by giving timely and helpful replies and letters, and of asking information upon any subject they wish light on. All communications designed for this department should be addressed to the Editor "HOME" Housekeeper, P. O. Box 913, Philadelphia, Pa.

SAVE YOURSELF.

SOME years ago mother and I had quite a laugh over a sketch in a paper. An old lady had been lecturing her granddaughter on "housekeeping" and ended with: "Now, my dear, I hope you are economical." The granddaughter replied at once, "Yes, grandmamma, I save myself all I can!"

After two years of housekeeping I am ready to cry "Bravo!" to the granddaughter's reply. How many young housekeepers, or old ones, either, for that matter, are as wise as this one was? How many intelligent, happy brides sink all their brightness, and nearly all happiness, in a weary round of "must-be-dones." No matter how strongly nature rebels or how much precious strength is lost, they must do just so much every day, and in just the same old, weary way.

There are many helps in the kitchen of to-day, or, rather, should be, yet we may often hear a young woman (buying her first housekeeping outfit) say, "Oh! yes, those things are nice, but they cost more than the old-fashioned ones." So, instead of starting right, even at the cost of a few cents more to do so, they put up with poor and cheap goods, and in all the years after wish they had spent a little more and had good articles.

I did not mean to speak of these things

when I began, however, but of the wasted strength put into housework. You see a young housekeeper go to work in the morning full of life and "fuss," and by noon she is "so tired," and as limp as an old dish-cloth! Why? Because she prides herself on never sitting down until everything is done. All pleasure in her dainty home is gone, because she is so tired. Girls, do try to save yourself; learn the easiest ways to do things; and do them in that way. Perhaps some of your older neighbors may call you lazy; if so, just compare their ages with your own and see if you care to be so worn and old in a few years.

All last summer we lived in a lonely place where it was impossible to get help of any kind in the house. I had the washing and all to do myself. At first the idea of letting things go, as "John" put it, was dreadful; but after working all day in a hot kitchen and hanging out clothes with the sun broiling down its fiercest, I made up my mind that such work did not pay, as an entire week of neuralgia followed it.

After that, during the hot days (and prairie days can be hot when they try), I had everything ready during the day, on Monday, if possible, and washed the clothes toward evening, putting them in clean, cold water to stay until the next morning. Then there was nothing to do but to blue, starch, and hang them out, all of which could be done before breakfast. The clothes will be sweeter and whiter for a long day of sunshine, and when you bring them in at night, are ready to be folded for ironing next day. All the kitchen towels, bread cloths, dish cloths, stockings, and woven underwear I took from the line, folded them smoothly, and put them away without ironing. Slovenly? well,

perhaps it was; but it doesn't give one the headache or a pain in the side to iron them in that way.

Then lamp cleaning: we see some of our best housekeepers with a pan of water, two or three rags, a piece of soap and perhaps a brush, with streams of water all over the table and hands full of smut, "cleaning lamps." In place of all this, take the globe from the lamp, hold it over the steam of the tea-kettle, then rub with a piece of newspaper. Trim and fill the lamp, rub the burner and the rest of the lamp with paper, serve them all in the same way, and your lamps are bright and clean. Empty them when a new wick is needed and wash out on wash day; put in the new wick and they won't need another wash until it is, in turn, worn out. If the burner turns green, a little salt and vinegar will clean it.

Rub the zinc under the stove once or twice a month with a woolen rag dipped in coal oil, and polish with paper. At other times a piece of paper is all that is needed to keep it looking nice.

Have a bag something like a shoe-bag hung near the kitchen closet, one pocket for paper bags, one for strings, and a larger one for newspapers. A small pincushion should be added; then, when you want a pin "real quick" you need not run to your nice cushion with wet hands, or run up-stairs when you are tired. When blacking the stove, put the hand in a paper bag and then grasp the brush; it is cleaner than to keep old gloves or mittens. The bag is useful in toasting bread, as well, as you may then use a short fork and not burn the hand.

There are many things I want to say, but this paper is so long already that they must wait.

BROWNIE.

[Say them in future, will you, please? We wish we might be allowed to call this the "first paper," being assured that others of the same stamp will follow.]

WELL-TRIED RECIPES.

EDITOR "HOME" HOUSEKEEPER:—I will send "Old Maid" my way of making dumplings, which has never failed me, and which I think very nice. For one quart of sifted flour take two heaping

teaspoonfuls of baking powder (or two heaping teaspoonfuls of cream of tartar and one of soda), and one small teaspoonful of salt. Wet it up with sweet milk, mold lightly, roll out about one inch thick, cut out with biscuit cutter, remove cover from soup kettle, and place the dumplings around on top of the soup, allowing the broth, which must be boiling, to nearly cover them. Boil steadily with the kettle cover off for ten minutes; then turn them with a fork and boil ten minutes longer.

MRS. F. E. S.

DEAR "HOME" HOUSEKEEPER:—Here is a recipe for cheap pudding: One egg, two cups of sugar, three pints of milk, four slices of bread or a dozen large crackers soaked in hot water, one pint of sweet apples cut into pieces as large as a hickory nut; flavor with lemon and bake. Sour milk sweetened with a little soda will do, or even water with a little butter if you have no sweet milk. Boiled rice instead of bread, with raisins, currants, or other fruit, will make a nice variation, and molasses with spices instead of sugar and lemon makes it suit some people better.

Dumplings (for "Old Maid"): One cup of sour milk, one teaspoonful of salt, one-half teaspoonful each of soda and pepper, one tablespoonful of butter, flour to stir very stiff; drop by spoonfuls into the soup while boiling. We like them best made with Graham flour.

E. L.

DEAR EDITOR:—I find the "HOME" MAGAZINE so full of interesting matter that no other can fill its place on my table. Lulu H. B. asks for a recipe for making sweet pickles of pears. I send her mine: Peel and core the pears whole; to five pounds of the fruit take two and one-half pounds of sugar and one quart of good vinegar; put the sugar and vinegar on the stove, let it come to a boil, and pour over the fruit, repeating this process six times in succession; then put fruit and all on and boil for ten minutes. I stick two or three cloves in each pear, tie some of the same in a clean cloth, putting in also a few sticks of cinnamon for flavoring.

MRS. A. P. BYWATERS.

DEAR "HOME:"—In answer to a call for vinegar pie, I send a well-trying recipe: One and one-half pints of water, one-half pint of strong vinegar, one coffee cup of sugar, a lump of butter the size of a walnut, pinch of salt, four rounding teaspoonfuls of cornstarch dissolved in a gill of cold water; flavor to suit your taste—we prefer orange or lemon; put the water, sugar, vinegar, and butter on to boil; then add one or two well-beaten eggs to the cornstarch, stirring this into the mixture when it comes to a boil; will make three pies; bake with one or two crusts as you like.

Can any of the sisters tell me how to keep honey from candying in the winter?

AUNT CHRISTINE.

[If strained honey, heat it up thoroughly.]

DEAR EDITOR "HOME:"—My recipe for fruit cake, which I compounded to save weighing, is: One and one-half cupfuls of butter, two cupfuls of sugar, one and one-half cupfuls of eggs, one teaspoonful each of cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg, three cupfuls of prepared flour, six cupfuls of raisins, two cupfuls of currants, and two cupfuls of citron; mix the fruit with one cupful of flour; for icing, two cupfuls of confectioners' sugar, four tablespoonfuls of milk, and one teaspoonful of vanilla or lemon; beat well; ice when nearly cold.

Pumpkin Bread: Three cupfuls of stewed pumpkin, one cupful of meal or cerealine, three-fourths cupful of butter, one cupful of sugar, one-half cupful of milk, one teaspoonful each of cinnamon, ginger, and salt, five cupfuls of prepared flour; bake slowly. To be eaten with butter.

M. E. M.

[The little "Christmas Song" shall appear when the swift-going months bring the holiday season around once more. It is rather late for the Christmas of 1887.]

DEAR EDITOR:—I send two recipes which I have tested, time and again, and found to be very good.

Cream Puffs: Put one-half cupful of butter and one cupful of hot water in a basin, set on the stove until it boils up, then stir in one cupful of flour; take from

the stove and allow to get cold, then stir in three eggs, unbeaten; drop by tablespoonfuls on well-buttered tins, not too close together; bake twenty to thirty minutes in a quick oven; this amount is enough for fifteen puffs. For the cream, boil one cupful of rich milk, taking care that it does not scorch (I use a pint basin to cook the cream in, setting it in a dish of boiling water); beat together one-half cupful of sugar, one egg, and two tablespoonfuls of cornstarch; stir this into the boiling milk, let it thicken, then cool and flavor with vanilla. Fill the puffs with the cream when wanted for use, either by making a hole in the side or by cutting a tiny hole in the bottom, fitting the piece back into the hole after filling.

Apple Custard Pies: Take six quite large and tart apples, pare, core, and grate them, add two well-beaten eggs, a pinch of salt, and one pint of milk—to have the milk a part cream is better; sweeten to your taste, and bake in crust same as custard pie, grating nutmeg liberally over the top before baking. This quantity makes two good-sized custards.

Will some friend kindly tell me how to make "jelly roll" cake that will roll without breaking all up?

HITTY H.

AN APPRECIATIVE TRIO.

DEAR EDITOR OF THE "HOME:"—This is my first visit to the "HOME" Housekeeper, but I would like to thank Mrs. L. N. for her valuable suggestions in regard to washing with kerosene, as given in the January number. I have tried the "rule" and find it to do all she says it will; and I would advise others of the "HOME" housekeepers who have never tried it, and who are obliged, as I am, to do their own washings, to do so at the first opportunity.

Here is my recipe for a cup cake which has always proved reliable: One cup of sugar, one-half cup of butter (or one cup of sweet cream; when I use cream I omit the milk), two eggs, one-half cup of sweet milk, one heaping teaspoonful of baking powder, one-half teaspoonful of extract, two cups of flour. This also makes a good layer cake. By varying the filling you can have cream, chocolate, cocoanut, etc., as you like best.

MRS. G. M. SNELL.

[We have received more than one testimonial to the excellence of Mrs. L. N.'s method of washing from friends who, like yourself, "feel it their duty to thank the 'HOME' for benefits received." Let all try to send in from time to time "Notes" which will benefit their sister housekeepers, and thus substantially return thanks.]

DEAR SISTERS:—I want to write and tell you how much I do enjoy your letters in the "HOME" Notes; they are about the best part of the MAGAZINE. I have been a housekeeper twenty-two years, and the second year of my married life ARTHUR's was among my Christmas presents. I have taken it ever since with the exception of three years; one of those years I had the reading of a neighbor's copy, the other two I tried two highly recommended periodicals. But I do think, dear sisters, that ARTHUR's is the best of all. When my January number came I was delighted with it; it does seem as if it grows better with every number. Dear Pipsey! I always read your letters; and, Lichen, how I wish I knew you; but I presume I never shall meet you, as my home is within a few miles of Canada line and yours so far away.

But I wished to ask the sisters for some different ways of cooking oatmeal; also, what will take the tea stains out of a nice buff linen table-cloth?

SISTER MINTA.

[A lady friend, herself one of the "HOME" housekeepers, reports that Mrs. L. N.'s washing recipe took yellow stains from sheets which many previous scrubbing and boilings had failed to start. Suppose you try it on the tea stains and report with what success.]

DEAR EDITOR:—I have watched the "Notes" in the housekeeper's department and have been greatly pleased and benefited by them. I feel that I must shake hands with "Brownie," for her views and mine coincide all the way through. I am a "bread-winner," and am refreshed in my daily walk to and from my labor by the "beauties of God."

If the ladies who desire patterns for novelty braid trimming will address "Marian," box 837, Paris, Ill., I will send

them some patterns I have that they may not have seen, also crocheted thread lace. If my letter finds a corner in the pages of the "HOME" I will write again, giving some Christmas hints. Although a little out of season, it will be as well to begin to save scraps for next year's holidays.

MARIAN.

[May we suggest that each friend taking advantage of "Marian's" kind offer to send patterns inclose stamps for return postage. Else we fear she may have cause to regret her generosity. Though Christmas, for this season, has gone by, there are always birthdays to be observed, and hints concerning little gifts, fancy-work, etc., are always acceptable.]

NOTELETS.

DEAR EDITOR:—For some time I have been wondering if I had any information to impart, as I longed to join the pleasant company of housekeepers and repay, in part, the many favors received from them; so, when I saw in the January Magazine a request for roseleaf edging I thought "my chance has come." Inclosed you will find the pattern. I have also a combination of this with a different heading and a shell edge, making a lace forty-five stitches wide, which is very nice, and which I will send if any one wishes.

MIGNON.

[The "roseleaf edge" will be given if not too much like the one which appears in the March number. We think the other pattern will be desired.]

DEAR EDITOR:—You seem so kind that I cannot refrain from asking a question or two, even if not a housekeeper. When a gentleman is introduced and remarks, "I am very happy to make your acquaintance," what should the lady say—the same? What does "R. S. V. P." on invitations signify?

"LITTLE GREENIE"

[If a gentleman expresses pleasure at meeting you, say "Thank you," or "You are very good," or something of that kind. Do not repeat his own remark. "R. S. V. P." means "*Repondez s'il vous plait*," literally, reply if you please, and signifies that an answer is required.]

DEAR EDITOR:—Will you ask if some "HOME" housekeeper will give a recipe for making "javelle water," which I have seen spoken of as being excellent for removing stains, etc.?

A SUBSCRIBER.

[The following is a well-recommended recipe for javelle water; we will, however, leave the question open for "amendments." Dissolve one pound of sal soda in a tin vessel on the stove; place one-half pound of chloride of lime in a wooden pail, turn on enough cold water to dissolve it, pour in the dissolved soda and fill the pail with boiling water; let it settle, then strain through a cloth and bottle for use. This preparation is said to remove mildew or any stain except iron rust. Allow the stained spot to lie in the javelle water until it is removed, then wash in clear water.]

DEAR "HOME:"—Can some one of your many readers tell me the author of the poem in which occurs the expression, "All the air is thick with snow, for all the world is snowing"? also, what is the remainder of it?

LOTTIE F.

DEAR EDITOR:—I have often wondered if you know what a boon the "Notes" are to us young housekeepers. I have just been making some pumpkin pies, using rolled crackers instead of eggs, and they are very nice. Thank you for the suggestion. I added a little cream. Do all the sisters know that quite nice doughnuts can be made by using a cup of light snow in place of an egg? Will some friend please give me a sure rule for making raised doughnuts? Also tell me what will set colors in calicoes, etc., that are apt to be "fadey"?

YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER NO. 2.

[We rejoice in the possession of a grandmother, whose stock of old-fashioned recipes is unfailing, and who says that when she was a young housekeeper she used beef gall for the purpose of setting the color in silk, cotton, or woolen. The gall can be purchased for a trifle. Get out the liquid, bottle it, and use one large spoonful to a gallon of warm water, allowing the goods to stand in this. It must be

thoroughly stirred in the water and used without soap. Afterward, if desired, wash the article in warm suds, not putting soap directly upon the cloth.]

DEAR "HOME:"—Will some one kindly inform a novice in the culinary art how to make good pie-crust—tender, but not too lardy? and oblige

A NEW READER.

MIKADO LACE.

I see in your "Notes from 'HOME' housekeepers" in the October number of last year that R. K. D. wished the directions for making the Mikado lace. I send them:

Make a chain of twenty-four (24) stitches:

First row: Three double crochet in fourth stitch, chain two, three double crochet in same stitch, chain four, one double crochet in tenth stitch from first shell, chain three, one double crochet in same stitch, chain four, one shell in last stitch of chain, chain three, turn.

Second row: Shell in shell of first row, chain three, eight double crochet in three chains, shell in centre of next shell, chain five, turn.

Third row: Shell in shell, chain two, one double crochet between each of the eight double crochet, with one chain between, chain two, shell in shell, chain three, turn.

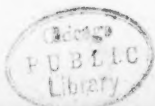
Fourth row: Shell in shell, three double crochet between each double crochet in last row, shell in shell, then put eight double crochet with chain one between in chain five at end of second row, catch with single crochet in end of first row.

Fifth row: One double crochet, chain three, one single crochet, all between the double crochet of last row, chain two, shell in shell, chain four, one double crochet, between third and fourth groups of third double crochet in last row, chain three, one double crochet in same place, chain four, shell in shell, chain three, turn.

Repeat from second row.

Shell means three double crochet; chain two, three double crochet in same stitch.

This lace is two and a half inches wide,



and is very pretty. Insertion is made to match like the heading.

I see that Miss E. H., of Harwinton, Conn., in the January number of present year, offers to send directions for knitting edgings. I will be very glad to get some,

as I knit edgings, and think it pretty and lasting trimming. M. E.

[The "double crochet" is the same that is often called "treble crochet," is it not? That is, the thread is put over the hoop before inserting in the work.]

"HOME" PUZZLES.

SOLUTIONS in the June number and solvers' names in the July number. All communications relative to this page must be addressed to the "Puzzle Editor HOME MAGAZINE," Box 913, Philadelphia, Pa.

"HOME" PUZZLE No. 1.

RHYMED CHARADE.

My *first* is called in city streets;
My *second* you will never be;
My *third* good anglers always take
When they go out to sea.
And when my *whole* you plainly ken,
You'll find it made of wood and men.
"KATHERINE TIPTOP."

"HOME" PUZZLE No. 2.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

I am composed of 27 letters.
My 22, 16, 10, 26, 6, is an idle fancy or suspicion.

My 8, 20, 3, 27, is a part of speech.
My 17, 1, 11, is a kind of grain.
My 2, 15, 4, 23, 25, is an animal.
My 5, 7, 24, 18, is a hard wind at sea.
My 19, 21, 25, 10, 9, is a small stream.
My 12, 14, 13, is a rope-dancer's pole.
My whole were the last words of a famous orator. L. E. P.

"HOME" PUZZLE No. 3.

A DIAMOND.

1. In safety. 2. The point or extremity. 3. A sacred mountain. 4. A place of exile. 5. Looked at steadily. 6. To clear. 7. In safety. C. H. S.

"HOME" PUZZLE No. 4.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

In fashion, not in style;
In furlong, not in mile;
In money, not in gold;
In fearless, not in bold;
In chapter, not in book;
In rivulet, not in brook;
In zealous, not in true;
In azure, not in blue;
In pleasant, not in sad;
In maiden, not in lad;
In fasten, not in bind;
Whole oft perplex the mind.
"GREENIE"

"HOME" PUZZLE No. 5.

TRANSPOSITION.

Laughing, she stood by the shadowed wall,
Sharp'ning her pencil-lead;
"I'm tired of your fancy profiles, all,
So mother's I map," she said.
"LUCY FIRR."

"HOME" PUZZLE No. 6.

EASY CUBE.

	1	.	.	.	2
5	.	.	.	6	.
.	3	.	.	.	4
7	.	.	.	8	.

1 to 2, vanity. 1 to 3, lively. 2 to 4, applause.
3 to 4, a stain. 5 to 6, to perform. 5 to 7, to feel with pleasure. 7 to 8, not old. 6 to 8, any inanimate object. 1 to 5, a dish of pastry. 2 to 6, to devour. 3 to 7, a plaything. 4 to 8, to pull.
MAY BLOSSOM.

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY "HOME" PUZZLES

No. 88.

Tree-less.

No. 89.

1. O(pi)nions. 2. Mo(nitre)ss. 3. Mar(gin)s.
4. Ho(nest)y. 5. W(ill)ing. 6. Mar(row)y.

No. 90.

10,001.

No. 91.

P
MAR
MACAW
RELATED

No. 92.

ARTHUR'S "HOME" MAGAZINE.

No. 93.

I
END
INDIA
DIE
A

PRIZE OFFERS FOR APRIL.

For first complete list we offer *Mother Songs*, a dainty little book made up of choice poetry, printed on fine, heavy paper, and bound in ragged edge cardboard covers. For second complete list, a year's subscription to an entertaining juvenile publication. For best incomplete list, three months' subscription to the same; second-best incomplete list, a neat book-tablet, with pencil.

a b c d e f g h i j
k l m n o p q r s t
u v w x y z
25

FASHIONS.

FASHION NOTES.

LONG draperies are not likely to go out of fashion for some considerable time, but already there are perceptible changes in the manner of their arrangement, the most noticeable feature being the further encroachment of side panels, which are now of such extent that the name is a misnomer, and to all appearance the whole front and side of the foundation is faced with the patterned or panel material to produce a veritable underskirt.

This necessitates narrower draperies, and one side is invariably looped or sloped in apron form, while the straight side is laid in plaits, and frequently trimmed down with buttons or braided designs.

Before describing the make of the newest spring gowns, it will be wise to devote a few lines to materials and the combination of color likely to be in favor during the coming season.

For the spring and early summer gowns, which will be more generally of cloth and thin woolen fabrics, the predominating relief tint will undoubtedly be tan color, and already there are delightful tailor-made costumes in bronze

TO OUR "HOME" PUZZLERS.

On account of certain new arrangements at the "HOME" office we are unable to give the list of solvers of February puzzles until next month. Hereafter, we shall allow more time for solving puzzles, as solvers' names will not be given until the month following the publication of solutions. Answers to April "HOME" puzzles should reach the "HOME" office by April 25th in order to be properly credited. The vote on the address question decides against giving them, only nom-de-plume or name. With the lengthening of time for receiving solutions, we hope for a large gain in our puzzling ranks. Good puzzles, too, are always acceptable.

and dull tan, or chocolate and Bismarck browns, relieved with a redder shade of tan.

The deeper tans are used for complete dresses, with a darker silk or fancy material for panels or underskirt, and this darker tint is again repeated in the hat, which is trimmed with the lighter shade of the gown.

For smarter wear, plush and velvet gowns in browns, bronze, and the darker blues have revers, vests, and panels of tan-colored faille, the velvet bonnet being invariably relieved by tan-colored bows.

There are graduations in tan color which vary from the dull drab to the bright red tan of the dogskin glove, and it requires some little care in selection in order to produce a successful combination.

Striped and checked material will still be largely employed in combination with plain material, but decided contrasts of color in plain materials will probably be more affected as the summer approaches.

Married women, guests at weddings, are wearing velvets in all shades, prelat, heliotrope, and black velvet being perhaps the most popular. A good example was made as an overdress with a train of

black Lyons velvet of that smoky-black tone which betokens richness of quality. The underdress was in mastic cloth, hand-worked in designs of wheat ears with steel and silver, interspersed with spangles. This was a most original gown.

Morning dresses of various kinds are so constantly needed, that descriptions of some which incorporate the leading novelties in style will be acceptable. A gray French cashmere and *poult de soie* was made as a polonaise with steel and white passementerie trimming, the sleeves full and gathered above the elbow. A gray Indian cloth pelisse had a front of a paler tone of Irish poplin, confined by a girdle passing round the waist, and tied at the left side rather low down; a muff accompanied this. In the trousseau of a bride whose husband's college had been Corpus Cristi, a pretty gown was made in the colors of the college—red and blue cloth—with a redingote over a wide plaited skirt fastening with four buttons like crocodiles on the left side, a red vest above, and a large roll collar like the fur ones seen on Russian coats. A dark bronze redingote was made in cloth, skirt and bodice in one, but the skirt portion draped and caught down by a flat pocket of jet passementerie, the bodice trimmed with jet motifs, finishing over the darts with fringe on each side, one a little deeper in the centre, a massive jet collar, and high bronze velvet throat band. The sleeves, high on the shoulders, were made of bronze velvet, the back had broad plaits like a

coat. This dress was exceedingly stylish. Dress notes of coming fashions prove that in France glacé silks are all the rage. Whether we shall adopt them remains to be proved; we have not hitherto done so. Black dresses are a necessary part of every wardrobe, and the newest idea are gowns made of alternate stripes of jet ribbon worked on a silk mesh and intermixed with silk. This new fabric will also be employed on lace gowns. Pale cloths are used for dinner gowns, with terry, silk, and velvet.

Velvet dinner gowns are simply made *en Princesse*, the train long, the bodice cut V back and front, and draped with the frilled fichu to be seen in old pictures. A new dinner or theatre bodice is made of alternate stripes of ribbon, velvet, and lace, very difficult to make, but exactly cut to the figure; silk drops fall from the centre of the back, and from the shoulders either side; a full cascade of lace is graduated to the waist, the basque being trimmed with a profusion of lace, falling over the hips. This can be worn with almost any colored skirt. A gown made with two bodices can often pay a double debt. This was the case with a pheasant-brown plush, falling in statuesque folds. One bodice had sleeves of apricot silk muslin, and a drapery of the same across the bust, as seen in pictures of Marie Antoinette, the other a Figaro jacket with a tight vest below the Figaro fronts, having no seam. A succession of Venetian chains drooped below the bust.





GOOD NIGHT.